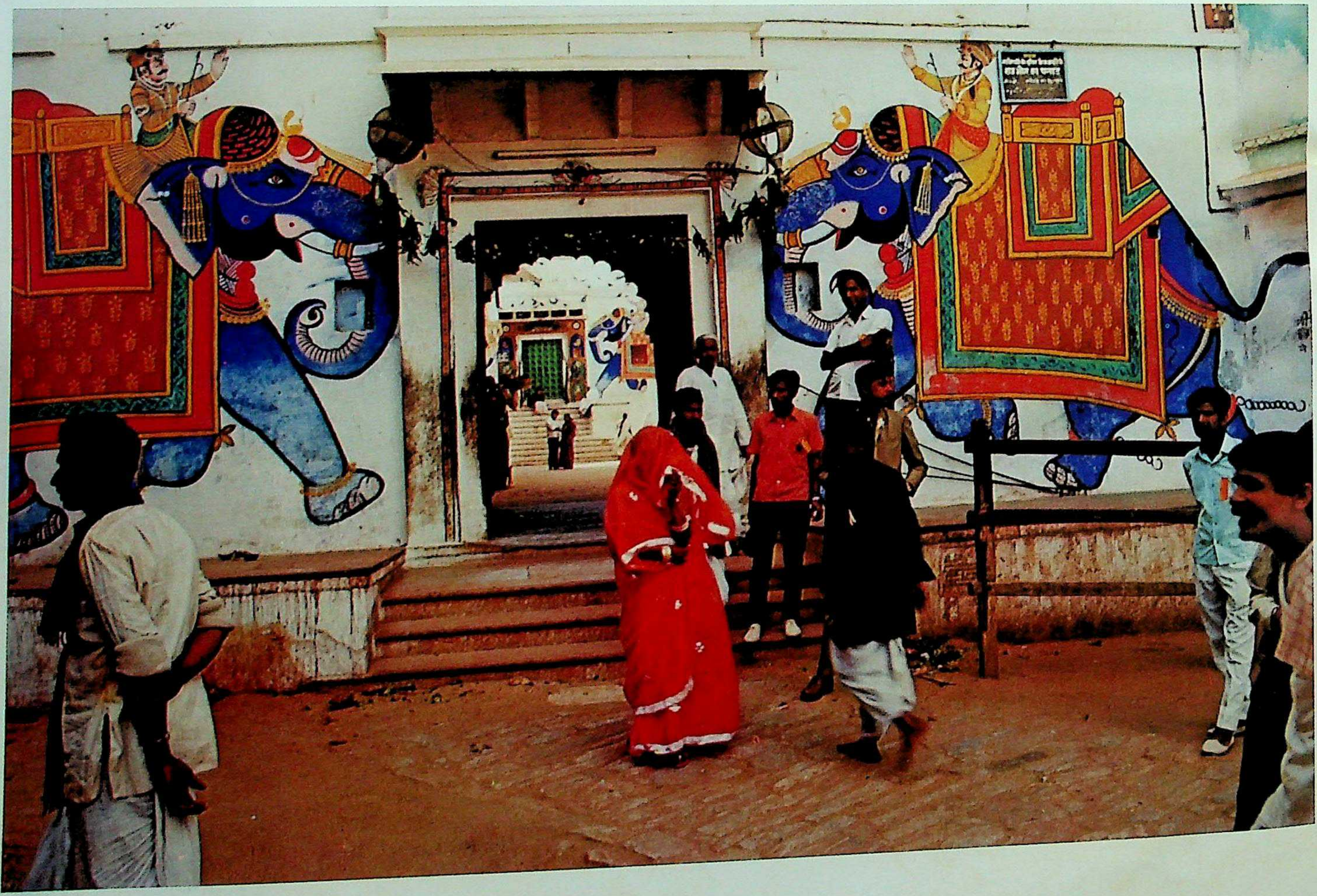
RĀJĀSTHĀNĪ TEMPLE HANGINGS OF THE KṚISHṆA CULT

The entrance to the temple of Śrī Nāth-jī at Nāthadwāra looking into the Govardhan Court towards the Sun Gate.



RĀJĀSTHĀNĪ TEMPLE HANGINGS OF THE KRISHNA CULT

from the Collection of Karl Mann, New York

Author and Guest Director
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Keeper of the Indian Section,
Victoria and Albert Museum, London

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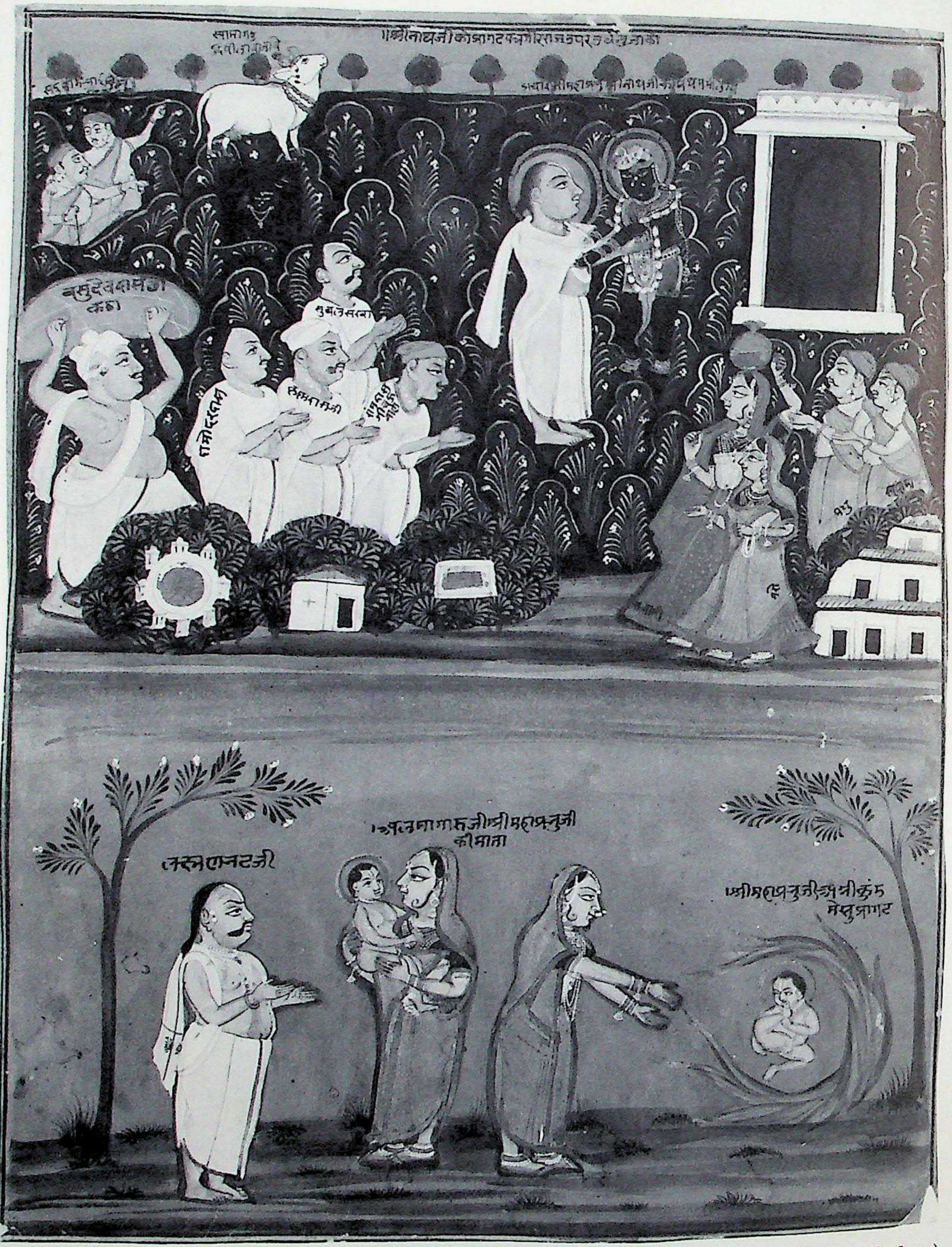
Figure 1: *John R. Freeman and Co.*

Frontispiece and Figures 2, 3, 4, 5: *Robert Skelton*

I should like to dedicate this catalog to Rai Krishna Dasa, in whose person the positive attitude to aesthetic appreciation developed by the Vallabha *Sampradāya* has found its highest expression. All students and lovers of Indian art are indebted to his example which has inspired so much progress in recent years.

Robert Skelton



लछमणभटजी
इलम्मागारुजीश्रीमहाप्रभुजी
कीमाता
श्रीमहाप्रभुजीश्रीकुंड
मेंसुप्रागट

Figure 1 Miniature painting showing Vallabhāchārya's parents finding their baby son (below) and the discovery and installation of the image of Śrī Nāth-jī on Mount Govardhan (above), Nāthadwāra school, 19th century. *Courtesy of Messrs. Maggs Bros.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am particularly indebted to Mr. & Mrs. V. L. Doshi for helping me to visit temples and make contact with members of the Vallabhāchārī sect. To Mrs. Doshi, I owe a special debt for her constant interest in discussion and investigation of the Vallabhāchārī paintings. His late Highness the Mahārājā of Kishangāṛh and the Gosāīṅ of the Śrī Dwārkeśjyoti Mandir at Baṛodā both generously allowed me to attend worship in private shrines and the latter and his associates were kind enough to answer questions about the subject matter and use of *pichhavāīs*. I also benefited from discussions with other members of the sect and remember Śri Shantikumar Morarjee and Paṇḍit Keka Shastri with particular gratitude. My warm thanks are also due to Miss Gira Sarabhai, who showed me many fine *pichhavāīs* and gave me access to the Calico Museum of Textiles during its reinstallation after the recent war. Śri Jagdish Mittal wrote to me on the subject of *pichhavāīs* in the Deccan, Śri Kalyan Krishna gave helpful comments on part of the catalog and Mrs. Kay Talwar made suggestions about the Mānasi Gangā and *Baniā Pāv* festival, which I am glad to follow. Dr. and Mrs. Moti Chandra of Bombay, my wife, sons and colleagues in London and others have helped in various ways and earn my gratitude. In New York, my brief encounter with the paintings in the exhibition was made enjoyable by the friendly presence of Mr. Neal Scully and his companions. I am most grateful to Mr. Karl Mann for the opportunity to study the Collection.

Robert Skelton

The American Federation of Arts is very pleased to present this exceptional exhibition of Rājāsthānī Temple Hangings of the Kṛishṇa Cult. The hangings are drawn from the Collection of Karl Mann, New York, to whom we are particularly indebted for his generous loan of the material for a period of three years.

We are also very privileged to have had Robert Skelton, Deputy Keeper of the Indian Section of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, select the twenty-five works from the extensive Collection of Mr. Mann, and write the first major and scholarly text on the subject for the catalog.

The Federation is also grateful to Roger M. Arlington of Mr. Mann's staff, and in particular to Neal Scully, Custodian of the Collection, who painstakingly worked out all the details for the preparation of the exhibition with our staff. Otto E. Nelson's excellent photographs are also gratefully acknowledged.

Finally, I should like to thank members of the staff. Jane Tai supervised all aspects of the exhibition since its inception and jointly edited the catalog with Mr. Skelton. Konrad Kuchel offered his counseling throughout the preparations, Michael Shroyer designed the catalog and related graphics and Lynn Allegaert coordinated publicity. Catherine Perebinossoff contributed research, Mary Ann Monet assisted in tour arrangements and, with Susie D'Alton contributed secretarial assistance.

Wilder Green, Director
The American Federation of Arts

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Like all the older mythologies of the world, that of India has recorded many stages of man's religious development and preserved them as strata in an archeological sequence. In different epochs of the past, man's concepts of the supernatural powers that he visualized governing his immediate environment, or the larger universe, have changed according to his role as hunter, pastoralist, farmer or city dweller. The gods appear in various forms according to man's need or his powers of comprehension and, in the stories which record their genealogies and actions, we find dim echoes of social customs, changes and conflicts otherwise lost to history.

The deities of an alien or conflicting group become demons: the amalgamation of societies, or absorption of social groups within others, more powerful or progressive, results in heavenly marriages — or the fusion of several deities into one, who retains their names as synonyms for himself and takes over their myths and attributes in a gradual process of aggrandizement. With social change, great gods, whose power caused the entire universe to tremble, fall into obscurity or cling vainly to pretentious titles like 'King of the Gods' while superseded by others who usurp their functions.

Often, these emerge to the supreme role from disreputable origins and finally, falling into the clutches of philosophers, have spiritual interpretations placed upon their less creditable dealings and find themselves exalted into remote abstractions to whom only mystics can lead the baffled layman.

Vishṇu, the second member of the Hindu trinity, is such a deity, already superior to the original First Cause, Brahmā, who carries out his creative role as Vishṇu's agent. Yet Vishṇu shares an uneasy equality with his rival Śiva, the third member of this trinity. Each of these two is credited by his sectarians with the title of Supreme Being and each — Preserver and Destroyer — by association with a specialized function within the evolution of the cosmic cycle, contains within himself the seeds of redundancy.

Vishṇu, in his role as Preserver of the Universe, has intervened many times in the destinies of gods and men by adopting animal or human forms. Ten of these incarnations are of special importance. Two of them, Rāma and Kṛishṇa, have superseded Vishṇu himself in the eyes of many of his devotees, for each, according to the sects which hold him as their ideal, is the most perfect manifestation of the Supreme Spirit. There are many of these sects and one of them has recently begun to acquire converts in the West as the Hare Kṛishṇa movement. Its founder, Chaitanya, was a Bengālī mystic of the late 15th and early 16th centuries who preached intense adoration of Kṛishṇa and imbued his followers with a fervor which found expression in ecstatic public repetition of the Lord's Name together with dancing and singing known as *saṁkīrtan.*

There lived another man contemporary with Chaitanya, who also founded an influential movement based on *bhaktī*, or loving adoration, of Kṛishṇa. Apart from an occasion in the 19th century, when his sect incurred the disapprobation of Victorian morality and became the subject of a celebrated legal hearing, it has attracted much less attention. Its doctrine, the Way of Grace (*Pushṭi Mārg*), emphasizes the fact that salvation comes from God alone and thus to be a member of the sect is to be one of his elect — a fact which may partly account for the absence of the proselytizing zeal which characterizes Chaitanya's movement.

Another distinct difference from Chaitanya's cult is the fact that the worship of Kṛishṇa in this sect takes place in private temples which are designed like large rambling palaces with many courtyards and shrines quite different from the normal Hindu temple plan. Emphasis is placed primarily on service to the image of the God and the temple is regarded as his household in which he may be paid every attention and have every luxury bestowed on him. The shrine, in which the image is housed, is decorated with cloth hangings which may be patterned with block printing, brocading or embroidery but are also very frequently of cotton, painted with scenes in watercolor pigments or other techniques such as *kalamkārī* (see glossary). The subject matter of these cloth paintings varies according to the particular ceremonies for which they are intended and they are made in sets so that every item in the decoration of the shrine is appropriate for the occasion of its use.

The whole tenor of worship in this sect is directed toward the development of aesthetic enjoyment and the word *rasa* (primary meaning: sap or juice) which denotes this, among other meanings, is also applied to the deity himself and alludes to his ineffable bliss. With this concentration on visual display and aesthetic enjoyment in the presentation of the deity to his devotees, it is not surprising that the larger and more spectacular of these cloth hangings have excited appreciation for their aesthetic qualities alone. The principal hanging in each set is the one which drapes behind the image and acts as a kind of stage set (see catalog number 1). These are painted with scenes showing worship within the shrine (e.g. catalog numbers 1, and 11-16) or events in Kṛishṇa's life as an incarnation of Vishṇu (e.g. catalog numbers 3-9 and 21). Because of their position in the shrine they are given the name *pichhavāī,* i.e. 'something at the back'. Their visual appeal is immediate and obvious, but for an appreciation of their meaning it is necessary to be acquainted with the cult they serve and its founder.

THE FOUNDER OF THE SECT

Vallabha, who was subsequently honored with the title *Āchārya* (religious teacher) and thus called Vallabhāchārya, was the son of a South Indian *Brāhmiṇ*, Lakshmaṇ Bhaṭ. His family came from the area of the Kistna delta known as Andhra Deśa in the Eastern Deccan, where several of his ancestors had written books on religious topics. Vallabha's mother, Yallamāgarū, was the daughter of a priest in the service of the royal family of Vijayanagar, the great Hindu kingdom which resisted the power of its Muslim neighbors in South India during medieval times.

Before the birth of his distinguished offspring, Lakshmaṇ Bhaṭ took his wife on a pilgrimage to various sacred cities in North India and settled for a while in Benāres. Rumors of an impending invasion of the city caused him to leave for the South and during the journey his wife gave premature birth to a son in a forest near the town of Champāraṇya in Central India. As the child appeared to be stillborn, the parents left him and continued their journey but at night in a dream the god Vishṇu told them that he had taken birth in the child, which was still alive. They accordingly returned to the spot where they found that the baby was indeed alive and, furthermore, protected by a circle of flames (figure 1). Ignoring its few very obvious mythical accretions this is a remarkably credible account of Vallabhāchārya's birth. This event is said to have taken place in 1479 A.D. although some sources record it as being six years earlier.

On arriving at the neighboring town, Vallabha's parents learned that the expected invasion of Benāres had not taken place and so they returned to the city and lived there until Vallabha was eleven years old. It was here that he received the beginning of his religious education but this was cut short by his father's death. Vallabha then separated from his family and traveled south on pilgrimage, eventually reaching Vijayanagar, where his maternal uncle was an official. It is claimed that Vallabha here took part in a disputation with some followers of the philosopher Śaṅkara and was acclaimed as an *Āchārya* by the ruler. If, however, the king has been correctly identified as Kṛishṇadevarāya this event is not likely to have taken place before 1509.

Whatever the truth of this alleged boyhood success, the ensuing years were spent in three long pilgrimages throughout India, in which Vallabha visited many sacred sites and engaged in discussions with various religious leaders. His first pilgrimage ended at Gokul, near Mathurā, which was the setting of Kṛishṇa's boyhood. Here, in an area full of associations with the god, Kṛishṇa appeared to Vallabha in a vision and directed him to preach the gospel of salvation by God's grace (*Pushṭi Mārg*). Also during his stay near Mathurā, Vallabha learned of the discovery of the image that occupies a central place in the worship of his sect and figures in the majority of *pichhavāīs*. This is the icon of Govardhannāth, usually known as Śrī Nāth-jī, which shows Kṛishṇa holding up the mountain, Govardhan, as an umbrella to shield his followers from rainstorms unleashed by the god Indra.

According to the literature of the cult, this image was first discovered long before Vallabha's birth, in a hole on Mount Govardhan itself. At first only one arm was visible but on the day of Vallabha's birth the face also appeared and from this time it was fed miraculously each day by a cow which poured milk into its mouth. Sadupaṇḍe, the owner of the cow, suspecting theft, followed the animal to discover why it was always dry when he tried to milk it. On seeing the miracle, he made daily offerings to the image. One day when Vallabha was resting near Sadupaṇḍe's house he heard a voice, which he recognized as that of Kṛishṇa, asking Sadupaṇḍe's daughter to take the daily offering. Immediately Vallabha went and worshipped the image, which he subsequently installed in a small shrine (figure 1). This was in 1500-2. Later in Vallabha's lifetime a large temple was erected for the image on Mount Govardhan by a rich merchant. It is this same image which was allegedly removed to Nāthadwāra, the present headquarters of the sect, at a later date.

After this stay at Gokul, Vallabhāchārya embarked on a second pilgrimage through many parts of North India before returning to Benāres, where he married and began life as a householder. The accounts of his pilgrimages are conflicting but it appears that following his marriage he undertook yet another pilgrimage before returning to Benāres with the intention of settling down. However, he found the atmosphere of religious controversy too distracting in the holy city and retired to the village of Adel, near Allāhābād, at the confluence of the sacred rivers Ganges and Jumnā. Here he remained for two decades, preaching and writing about the system of salvation which he had originated.

During this period in 1511 and 1516, his wife bore him two sons, Gopīnāth and Viṭṭhalnāth, of whom only the latter lived to carry on his father's work. Eventually, in his early fifties, Vallabha decided to enter the final stages of a *Brāhmiṇ's* life by renouncing all worldly ties and adopting the role of a wandering ascetic. He went for the last time to Benāres and after a period of meditation on the bank of the Ganges he entered the river and gave up his life in the year 1532.

In his lifetime, Vallabha was supported by a number of close companions and disciples, of whom the chief one, Dāmodardās, acted as a spiritual guide to Vallabha's surviving son so that the boy could continue his father's work. Viṭṭhalnāth lacked his father's intellectual power as a philosopher but was a deeply emotional devotee of Kṛishṇa. Although he completed his father's commentary on the *Vedānta-Sūtras*, his main impulse appears to have been toward devotional literature and ritual, in which he displayed his gifts as a poet and musician. Like his father, he also went on lengthy tours of pilgrimage. The first of these, to Gujarāt in 1544, established the new faith in the area where it now has most of its adherents. Subsequently he resided at the court of the celebrated queen Durgāvatī in Central India, then at Allāhābād, Mathurā, and finally Gokul, where he established a temple of the distinctive type that is characteristic of the sect. This building, in which the family image of Śrī Nāth-jī was re-housed, took the form of a palatial mansion (*havelī*) in which Viṭṭhalnāth and his family lived and tended the image according to the daily ritual, which he established.

During this period, the growth of the sect appears to have benefited from the settled conditions which developed during the reign of the Mughal Emperor Akbar. The emperor's tolerance towards non-Muslims appears to have been extended to direct patronage of Viṭṭhalnāth, who was given tax-free grants of land and other privileges such as the right to graze his cattle on crown lands. It is in one of the royal commands in favor of Viṭṭhalnāth that we first find him given the title of Gosāīṅ (Goswāmī or 'Lord of Cattle'), by which he became generally known in contrast to his father's titles of Āchārya-jī 'Spiritual Guide', or Mahāprābhū-jī 'The Pre-eminent One'.

Unlike his father, Viṭṭhalnāth married twice and had a large family, among whom seven sons survived him and continued as his successors. The shrine of Śrī Nāth-jī remained in charge of the eldest son and the others were given images of Kṛishṇa in other forms, with which they set up shrines of their own. During the course of time, disputes arose as to the possession of these images and the locations of them also moved occasionally due to various circumstances such as religious persecution.

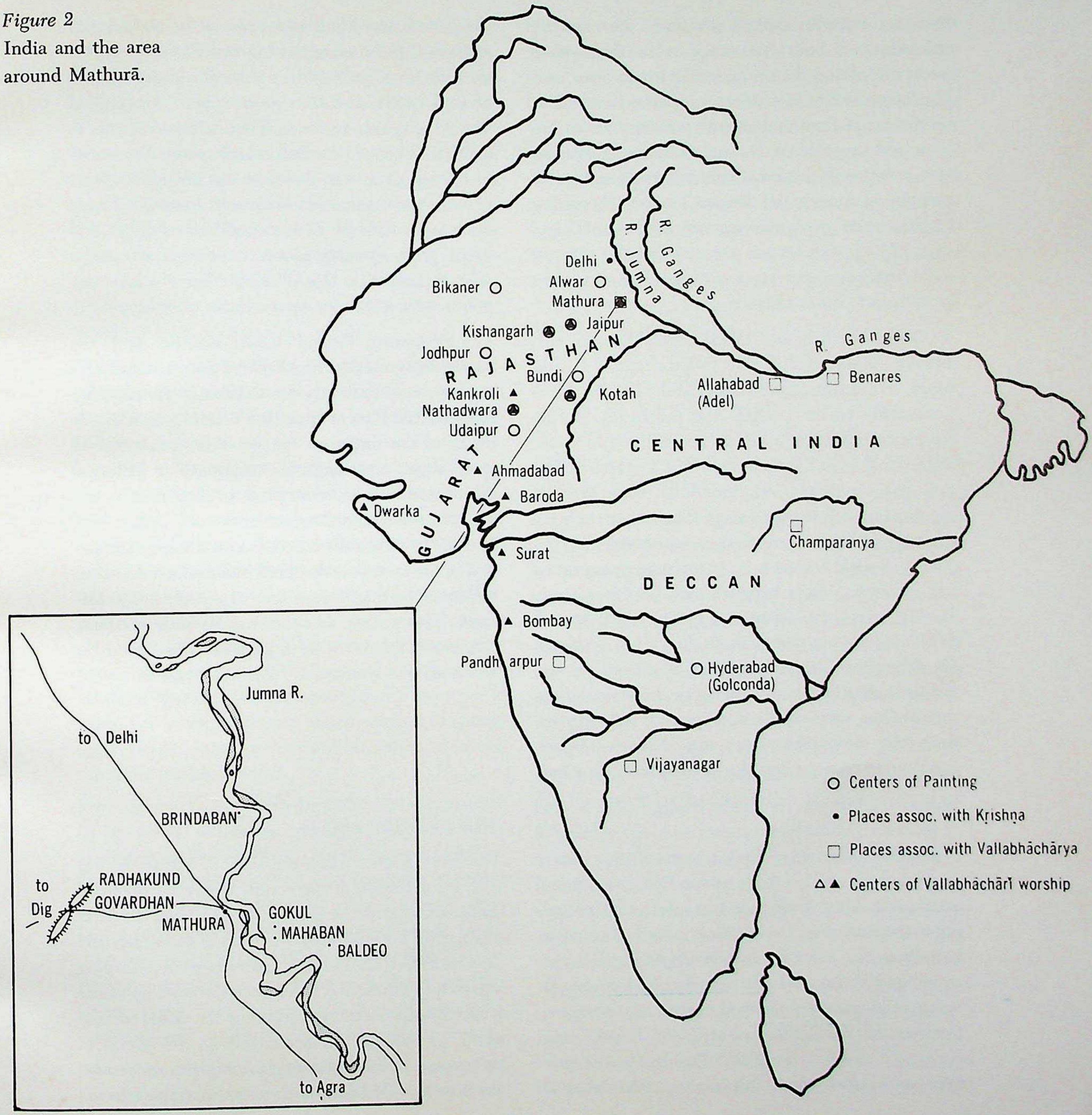
The most able of Viṭṭhalnāth's successors was his fourth son, Gokulnāth, who made a significant contribution to the literature of the sect and also left a large collection of aphorisms which deftly and often wittily sum up the essentials of his grandfather's teaching in a form that was more easily comprehended by the laity. His descendants and their disciples stand slightly apart from the sect as a whole, from which they differ in minor respects over matters of belief and practice.

VALLABHĀCHĀRĪ THEOLOGY

In its doctrines the Vallabha *sampradāya* has achieved a remarkable harmony between the aloof metaphysical speculations of the Vedānta philosophy as interpreted by Vallabha and the less remote affections of human love, which are directed through Kṛishṇa as a personal deity towards his ultimate nature as pure unqualified Being. These two sides to Vallabha's teaching are expounded in his two principal discourses, which are commentaries on two of the four scriptures which provide the foundation of his beliefs. They are (1) the *Aṇubhāshya,* which gives his interpretation of the enigmatic *Brahmā-* or *Vedānta-Sūtras* dealing with the nature of reality and (2) his *Subodhinī,* which is a commentary on the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa,* where the myths pertaining to Kṛishṇa are preserved. By contrast with the *Brahmā-Sūtras,* these stories of the *Bhāgavata* are of a strongly devotional character. To Vallabha himself, however, this suggestion of a dichotomy between the subject of higher speculation and the yearnings of the human soul would doubtless have been offensive, since the vedāntic doctrines expounded by him were of the strictist variety of monism, as is emphasized by its name, Śuddhādvaita 'pure non-dualism', to distinguish it from the seeming monism (*advaita*), or so-called 'qualified monism' (*viśishṭādvaita*) of his philosophical predecessors, Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja.

Vallabha, like earlier Vaishṇava theists such as Rāmānuja, was particularly opposed to the view of the great 9th century vedāntist, Śaṅkara, who held that the only reality (*Brāhmaṇ*) was completely impersonal and devoid of attributes and that apart from

Figure 2
India and the area around Mathurā.


R. Jumna
R. Ganges
Delhi
Alwar
Bikaner
Mathura
Kishangarh
Jaipur
Jodhpur
RAJASTHAN
Bundi
Kotah
Kankroli
Nathadwara
Udaipur
Allahabad (Adel)
R. Ganges
Benares
CENTRAL INDIA
GUJARAT
Ahmadabad
Baroda
Dwarka
Surat
Champaranya
DECCAN
Bombay
Pandharpur
Hyderabad (Golconda)
Vijayanagar
○ Centers of Painting
• Places assoc. with Kṛishṇa
□ Places assoc. with Vallabhāchārya
△ ▲ Centers of Vallabhāchārī worship
Jumna R.
to Delhi
BRINDABAN
to Dig
RADHAKUND
GOVARDHAN
MATHURA
GOKUL
MAHABAN
BALDEO
to Agra

that, nothing else existed, whatever. The material universe and individual souls were thus purely phenomenal and their apparent existence was mere illusion produced by ignorance. Such a view offered no real scope for a theistic interpretation of the universe nor for salvation through devotion. It was not even completely devoid of contradictions in its treatment of ignorance and illusion (*māyā*). According to the theists' view this monism of Śaṅkarāchārya was only apparent since it reconciled the ultimate and phenomenal aspects of existence by seeing them on different planes of truth.

Vallabha, on the other hand, stated that the only Reality (*Brāhmaṇ*) is God, whose nature is existence, intelligent-consciousness and bliss. By God's inscrutable power (*māyā*) the properties of consciousness and bliss, although present, are rendered imperceptible in the inanimate world, which is thus real and a part of God. Individual souls are also identical with *Brāhmaṇ*, except that in them only the property of bliss is rendered imperceptible. By this means, Vallabha is able to place material creation and individual souls together with God in a single Reality, which thus entitles him to call his system *Śuddhādvaita*, or *pure* non-dualism (i.e. monism). He differs from his fellow theist, Rāmānuja, in seeing the individual soul as being of the essential nature of God, whereas Rāmānuja sees it as being distinct but inseparable from him. In this respect, Rāmānuja's monism may be described as qualified.

Within this exclusively single Being, which is God or *Brāhmaṇ*, Vallabha then goes on in the manner of traditional Indian scholasticism to postulate a variety of graded categories, both within God himself and within individual souls, who are subdivided according to their nearness to God. God in his highest form, Purushottama, is Śrī Kṛishṇa, the eighth incarnation of the god Vishṇu, who is regarded by Vallabha as being, in his youthful phase, the only complete manifestation of the deity (i.e. with the largest component of *Ānanda* or bliss). The childhood sport (*līlā*) of Kṛishṇa among his cowherd friends beside the Jumnā near Mathurā is seen as the eternal play of God. It is by taking part in this divine sport that the individual soul is able to share the highest degree of God's bliss, and thus partake of that aspect of him which exists in the soul but is imperceptible to it. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, which relates the stories of Kṛishṇa's youth is, therefore, the central scripture of Vallabha's system. It is through *bhaktī* or loving devotion to Kṛishṇa, as described in the *Purāṇa*, and by his grace (*pushṭi*) alone, that the human soul is able to proceed to that ultimate bliss which corresponds with *mokśa*, or release from causality.

The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, which together with the *Vedas, Bhāgvad Gītā* and *Brahmā-Sūtras*, constitutes the scriptural authority for Vallabha's doctrine, belongs to that class of later Hindu texts purporting to describe the origin of the universe, genealogy of gods, sages and kings and mythical or historical events which have taken place in time past or will occur in the future. Because of the pre-eminence of Kṛishṇa in Vallabha's creed, the most important section of the *Purāṇa* is the tenth book, which describes Kṛishṇa's earthly career and especially his childhood. The setting was the area around Mathurā, which was inhabited by a pastoral tribe called the Yādavas, who were ruled by King Ugrasena.

THE KṚISHṆA MYTH

The story begins when the wife of Ugrasena was seen by a demon in the forest, where he obtained union with her in the guise of her husband. Eventually a child named Kaṅśa was born of this union and demonstrated his demonic parentage by usurping Ugrasena's throne and forbidding the worship of the gods. Finally, after vanquishing the kings of the earth, he attacked the lesser gods in the person of their ruler, Indra. Following a complaint to Vishṇu, the Supreme God took birth in the womb of Devakī, a cousin of Kaṅśa, whose eighth son was destined by prophesy to kill the tyrant. Because of the prophesy, Devakī's earlier sons were killed by Kaṅśa but the seventh and eighth infants, Balarāma and Kṛishṇa, both incarnations of Vishṇu, were smuggled into the house of Nanda, the headman of a cowherd village on the opposite side of the Jumnā at Gokul. In the case of Kṛishṇa, Vāsudeva exchanged the baby for the daughter of Nanda's wife, Yasodā, who thereupon regarded the child-God as her own son. Kṛishṇa, whose name means 'black' was of dark complexion and is usually depicted with a blue skin, while his brother, Balarāma, is fair.

During their childhood the two divine incarnations played happily with the cowherd children and engaged in many mischievious pranks of the kind that endear male children to the maternal impulse in the hearts of Indian women. Their favorite mischief was the theft of butter and other milk products from the milkmaids. On one occasion, when Kṛishṇa wreaked havoc in the kitchen, Yasodā tied him to a mortar in order to restrain his turbulence. Incidents such as this occasionally gave his doting foster mother glimpses of his true nature, for, on finding himself alone, the infant dragged the mortar between two trees — thereby uprooting them and releasing two brothers who had been imprisoned as a result of a curse. On another occasion, when accused of eating earth, the baby Kṛishṇa opened his mouth to reveal the three worlds inside it.

From time to time, this idyllic childhood was marred by the arrival of demons sent by Kaṅśa in the hope of destroying the children. Usually these attacks involved the employment of a ruse requiring disguise, as in the case of the demoness Pūtanā, who tried to breast feed Kṛishṇa with her poisonous milk while disguised as one of the village women. She was destroyed herself when the baby sucked out her life. Other demons came in the forms of a calf, a crane, a snake, an ass, cowherds, a bull and a horse.

Apart from these hazards Kṛishṇa and his friends had various other adventures in which his miraculous powers were displayed. The god Brahmā once stole away Kṛishṇa's companions and their herds when they went out to graze, but Kṛishṇa, with his power of illusion (*māyā*), created duplicates of the missing boys and herds so that Brahmā was humbled. On two occasions Kṛishṇa and his companions were surrounded by forest fires, which, in the first case, he extinguished by sucking in the flames. Another incident was Kṛishṇa's intervention in the case of a serpent with many heads, named Kāliya, whose poisonous fumes were damaging vegetation and overcoming cattle on the bank of the river Jumnā, where he lived. To the astonishment and horror of the villagers, Kṛishṇa jumped from a tree on to the serpent's hoods and danced on them, assuming, in the process, his full weight as the Cosmic Being. Upon the intercession of his wives, Kāliya was permitted to live on condition that he moved his home away from the neighborhood of the village.

By this time, the villagers had in fact moved to the village of Bṛindāban on the other bank of the river to the north of Mathurā in the hope of escaping the disasters which were befalling their children in Gokul. This brought them into the vicinity of a range of hills called Mount Govardhan, or Giri Rāj, which has a particular importance for the Vallabhāchārī sect, since it was here that the image of Govardhannāth, or Śrī Nāth-jī, was found. The event represented by this image occurred after the harvest in late autumn when the villagers began preparations for the worship of Indra, who is nominal king of the gods.

When Kṛishṇa saw various confections being prepared in every house he asked his parents the meaning of this and was told that this was for the worship of the lord of the clouds on whose rain the villagers depended for the prosperity of their crops and herds. At this, Kṛishṇa argued that this worship of Indra was quite unnecessary and that since they were cowherds by occupation they should instead worship the mountain which overlooked the woods and pastures in which they grazed their herds. Thereupon the villagers went in procession to Mount Govardhan and arranged their food offerings before it. Kṛishṇa then, by his *māyā*, appeared in the form of the mountain king, whom the villagers then fed and praised. The annual celebration of this festival, named *Annakuṭ* or 'mountain of food', is one of the most important for the Vallabhāchārī community and is depicted in a large number of the *pichhavāīs* (see catalog numbers 3, 6 and 11-16).

In consequence of this transfer of worship from Indra to Kṛishṇa as the mountain king, the king of the gods unleashed his fury upon the villagers in a devastating rain storm. To save them, Kṛishṇa raised the mountain on the little finger of his left hand and held it above them as an umbrella until Indra realized that the Primeval Male was incarnate in Kṛishṇa and withdrew. It is this event which is depicted in the image of Śrī Nāth-jī installed by Vallabha as the principal image of his sect.

The Rāsa Līlā

Of even greater importance to this community in view of their stress upon loving adoration of God (i.e. *bhaktī*) as the means of attaining salvation, is the series of events narrated shortly before and after this episode in Kṛishṇa's life. By this time, Kṛishṇa was already growing into adolescence and the pranks which the milkmaids had found so beguiling during his childhood were beginning to acquire different overtones. They were, in fact, falling in love with him. The sound of his flute as he sat guarding the herds produced feelings of acute yearning in their hearts and they envied the fortunate piece of bamboo that was constantly in his company and so frequently touched by his lips. In order to win Kṛishṇa as their lord, they decided to go bathing in the month of Aghan (November-December) when it would be an auspicious time for washing away sins and craving a boon from the goddess Gaurī. The boon they wanted was Kṛishṇa's love. When they went to do this, Kṛishṇa was grazing his herds and, seeing what they were doing, he stole their clothes while they were in the water. A search followed and when they found Kṛishṇa sitting with the clothing in a *kadamba* tree they immediately concealed their bodies in the water. His demand that they should come out one by one and retrieve their garments met with angry reproofs but eventually they complied and promised to return and sport with him in the following New Year.

This reunion took place by the Jumnā after the next monsoon in late autumn, when the full moon shone in a clear starlit sky. The weather was cool and the landscape fresh and green after the rains when Kṛishṇa went into the forest and played his flute in the moonlight. Hearing this call, the milkmaids were torn between their love of Kṛishṇa and allegiance to their husbands and families. One of them, detained by her husband abandoned her body and achieved final release from rebirth. The others braved the terrors of the forest by night, only to be teased by Kṛishṇa for their brazenness. Then, relenting, he took them to the Jumnā bank and danced with them in a circle around him until, seeing them given over to pride, he deserted them and disappeared into the forest with his favorite, who in later literature was identified as Rādhā and elevated to the status of his consort. As soon as the milkmaids (*gopīs*) eventually found the pair together, his favorite also fell victim to pride and asked Kṛishṇa to carry her on his back. He agreed, but, as she put out her hand, he again disappeared and the *gopīs* disconsolately sat by the bank of the river recalling his virtues and actions. Their re-enactment of some of his feats, such as the raising of Mount Govardhan, is sometimes represented in *pichhavāīs* depicting this sequence of events (see catalog numbers 5 and 25).

Seeing their devotion, Kṛishṇa again appeared among them. Their sports and dancing continued and Kṛishṇa explained his actions towards them. After this, he and the *gopīs* performed a circular dance (*Rāsa Maṇḍala*), in which by his power of *māyā* he appeared next to each one so that she supposed that he danced with her alone (see catalog numbers 4-5). Finally, to relieve their fatigue, Kṛishṇa took them into the river and sported with them in the water (see catalog number 5) before sending them back to their homes.

These episodes of Kṛishṇa's *līlā* or sport with the *gopīs* are of particular importance in Vallabhāchārī teaching and practice since they parallel the concept of God's *līlā*, or divine play, by which Vallabha and other theistic writers account for the involvement of the undifferentiated *Brāhmaṇ* with the phenomenal world and individual souls. In fact, according to Vallabha the world was created specifically as a theater in which this *līlā* could take place. To distinguish Kṛishṇa's dancing and joyful sport in the forest from his *līlā* as a whole, the former is designated the *rāsa* or *rāsa līlā*, emphasizing its noisy and joyful character.

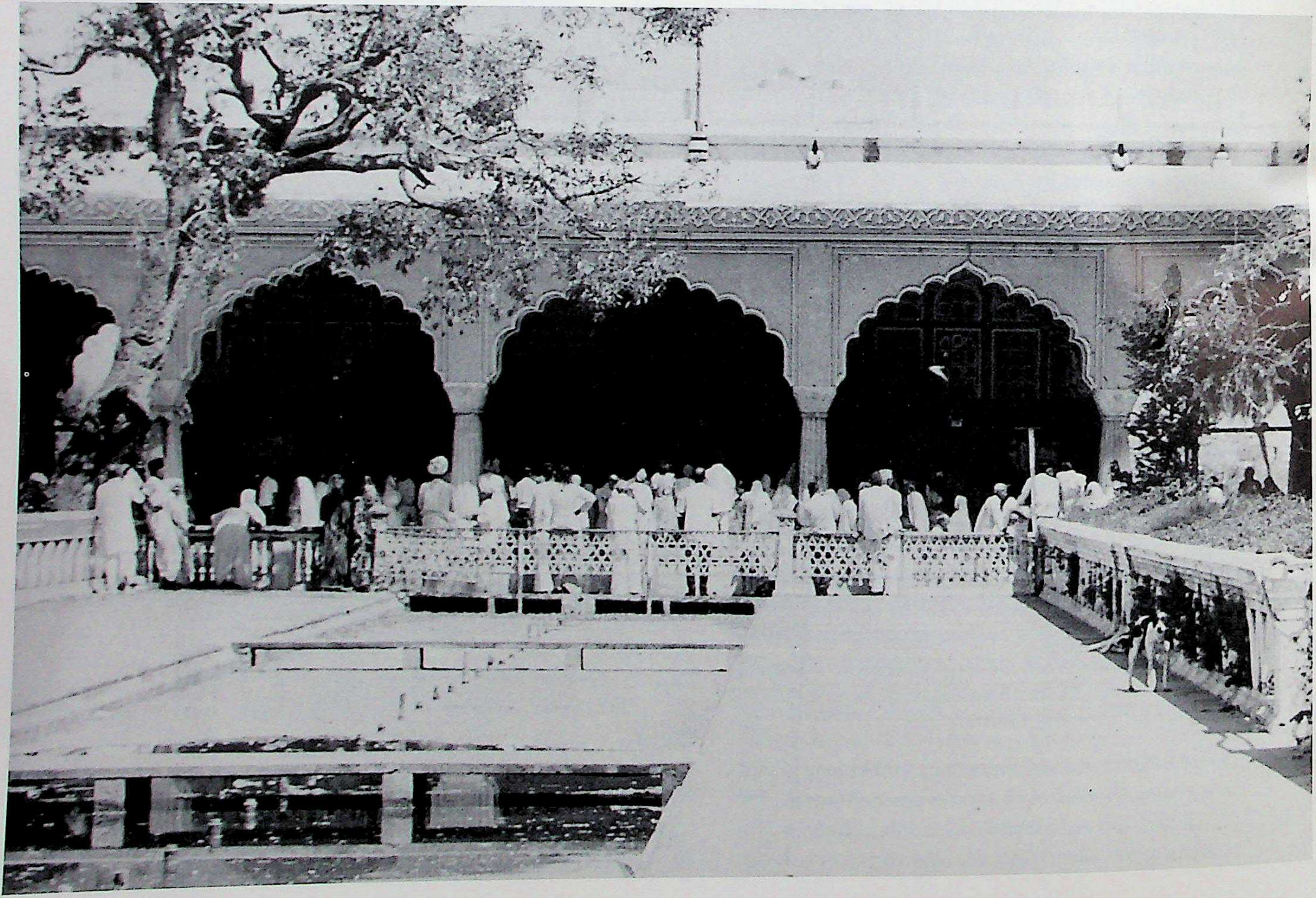
The *rāsa līlā* forms the virtual culmination of Kṛishṇa's life in Bṛindāban but his destiny as the destroyer of Kaṅśa still remained unfulfilled. The usurper had meanwhile learned of Kṛishṇa's escape at birth and was about to take revenge upon his father, Vāsudeva, when the sage-musician, Nārada, in his usual role of *agent provocateur,* intervened and suggested that the brothers should be lured to Mathurā on the pretext of wrestling and engaging in other trials of strength during the celebrations accompanying a sacrifice. Kṛishṇa's uncle, Akrūr, was accordingly sent with an invitation and the boys set out with their companions. At Mathurā, Kṛishṇa slew an elephant that was sent against him and then after killing the royal wrestlers he finally destroyed Kaṅśa himself. Ugrasena was restored to his throne and the two boys then returned to their true parents, who arranged for them to be educated to their new role as members of the royal family.

The remainder of Kṛishṇa's life as a prince, in which he defeats many enemies and founds his own golden city at Dwārkā on the coast of Gujarāt, has less devotional significance than his life as a cowherd although some importance is given to his marriage to eight queens and 16,100 other princesses. The first of these was his principal queen Rukmiṇī, who by contrast with Rādhā, is his legitimate consort. As a consequence of his departure, the *gopīs* are left deprived of his company and this leads to a significant episode in which Kṛishṇa sends his friend Uddhava to console them. Uddhava tells them of Kṛishṇa's true nature as *Brāhmaṇ* and recommends them to meditation upon God in this form but having known Kṛishṇa in person they are not easily reconciled to his absence or to recognizing in it a clue to the non-manifest character of the Ultimate Reality in its purest form. According to Vallabha's doctrine, this state of separation (*viyoga*) experienced by lovers of God is of greater value than the experience of union (*saṅyoga*), with which it alternates, since the devotee's desire for God is more consuming when he is felt to be absent.

This emphasis on God as the Divine Lover, although present in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, is made much more explicit in the vernacular poetry which grew up in connection with the Kṛishṇa cult at Mathurā and was largely associated with the Vallabhāchārī sect. The poetry, composed by devotees of Kṛishṇa in the Mathurā area, played an important role in the development of the vernacular literary renaissance in North India during the late medieval period and as a result *Braj Bhāshā*, the local dialect, became one of the leading literary forms of Hindī. Eight of the most important poets within this movement, known as the *Ashṭa Chhāp*, were disciples of Vallabha and his son Viṭṭhalnāth and their most outstanding member, the blind poet, Sūr Dās, was a close friend of the Āchārya. His devotional songs about Kṛishṇa form a daily part of Vallabhāchārī worship and have influenced both the ritual and art of the sect.

Certain episodes depicted in the *pichhavāīs* are entirely the product of this poetic literature and do not appear in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* itself. The most conspicuous of these is the *Dāna Līlā* (see catalog number 3) in which Kṛishṇa and his friends waylay

Figure 3 The worship of Śrī Govind dev-jī at the *havelī* in the City Palace at Jaipur during the Rāj Bhog ceremony.



the milkmaids as they carry curds to Mathurā, in order to exact a toll from them. In many *pichhavāīs* this scene is shown as taking place at the point where the Mathurā road passes through the Govardhan hill (compare map figure 2 with catalog numbers 3, 6, 13, 14, 16). This poetical literature tends to elaborate the themes of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, particularly those of Kṛishṇa's childhood, often with charming ingenuity. A great deal of it also goes far beyond the scriptures in describing in detail the lovemaking that takes place between Rādhā and Kṛishṇa including their various moods and stratagems. The depiction of these incidents generally falls within the domain of Indian miniature paintings, which were produced in sets and systematically illustrated the works of particular poets. Nevertheless, they do occasionally form the subject matter of temple hangings (see catalog number 21).

VALLABHĀCHĀRĪ WORSHIP

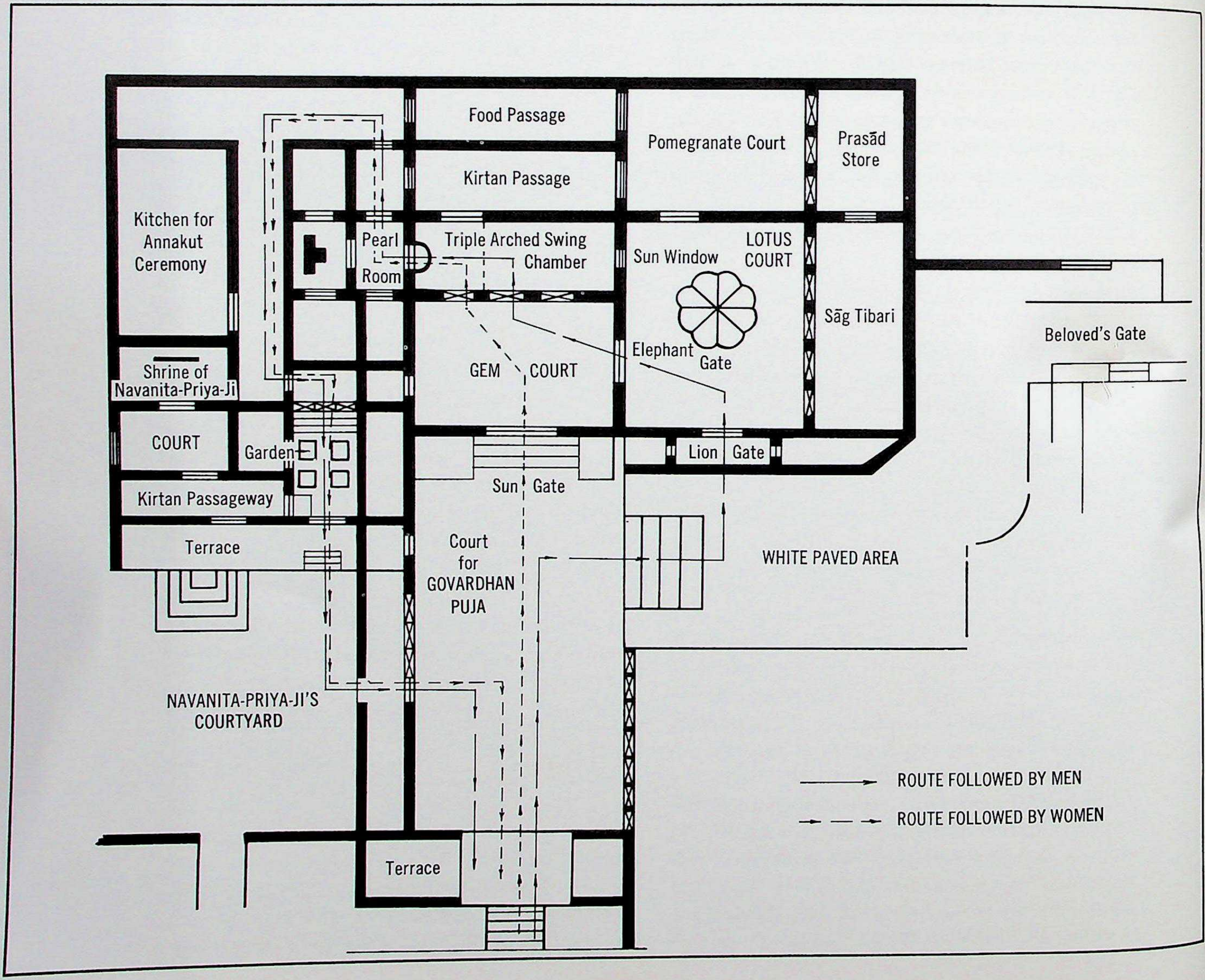
Although in literature, the number of events which could be illustrated in the *pichhavāīs* is vast, the subjects which actually appear are fairly limited for normally they depict only those aspects of Kṛishṇa's life which form a frequent and necessary part of Vallabhāchārī ritual. This ritual is more elaborate than that which takes place in most Hindu temples and follows a set daily pattern, which is modified in conformity with the various festivals that take place throughout the year. Many of these festivals are shared with vaishṇavite Hinduism as a whole but in the Vallabha *sampradāya* twenty-four are of special importance and several of these are exclusive to the sect (see Appendix II). Their occurrence with regard to the passing of the seasons is in most cases closely related to the seasonal cycle of events related in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and this is not surprising in view of the fact that the whole tenor of worship in this sect is directed towards the re-enactment of Kṛishṇa's various *līlās,* whereby, according to Vallabha's doctrine, the worshippers partake of the Lord's eternal bliss.

It is because of this dramatic element, which involves the elaborate decoration of the shrine and frequent redressing of the image, according to the part played by Kṛishṇa in his various sports, that Vallabhāchārī worship is called *darśan,* which means 'seeing' or obtaining a 'sight' of something, rather than *pūjā,* which is the general word for Hindu worship. The *pichhavāīs,* which depict Kṛishṇa's *līlās* taking place, play a very important part towards giving Vallabhāchārī worship its special character in recreating the land of Braj in the worshippers' very presence. This is particularly relevant in view of the fact that Vallabha treats the eternal Bṛindāban as the highest plane of existence and the ultimate goal to which the *jīva,* or soul, may aspire.

The complementary aspect of this worship from which it derives its other name, *sevā* 'service', involves the performance of various duties towards the image, which, in Vallabha's theology, is not merely a symbolic form of the deity but God himself in one of his special manifestations (*svarūpa*). Thus every day, the person of Kṛishṇa, as manifest in the image, is bathed, clothed and fed according to a strict and detailed routine. These attentions are performed by the priests, or Gosāīṅs, who are descended from Vallabhāchārya and honored with the title of Mahārājā.

Throughout the day there are normally eight opportunities for *darśan* called *jhānkīs,* or 'exhibitions', at fixed times so that people gather together, often in large numbers, to see the ceremonies take place. This gives the Vallabhāchārī rites a congregational aspect (see figure 3 and catalog numbers 11-13) that is normally lacking in Hindu temple worship, in which people tend to filter in and pay their individual devotions. There is some variation in these

Figure 4 Plan of the temple of Śrī Nāth-jī at Nāthadwāra.


Food Passage
Pomegranate Court
Prasād Store
Kirtan Passage
Kitchen for Annakut Ceremony
Pearl Room
Triple Arched Swing Chamber
Sun Window
LOTUS COURT
Sāg Tibari
Beloved's Gate
Elephant Gate
GEM COURT
Shrine of Navanita-Priya-Ji
COURT
Garden
Lion Gate
Sun Gate
Kirtan Passageway
Terrace
Court for GOVARDHAN PUJA
WHITE PAVED AREA
NAVANITA-PRIYA-JI'S COURTYARD
ROUTE FOLLOWED BY MEN
ROUTE FOLLOWED BY WOMEN
Terrace

daily ceremonies but in general they are as follows:

(1) *Maṅgala:* the waking of Kṛishṇa in the early morning
(2) *Śṛingāra:* dressing the image for the day
(3) *Gwāla:* Kṛishṇa leading the cows to graze
(4) *Rājbhoga:* the midday meal
(5) *Uṭṭhāpaṇa:* awakening from the midday nap
(6) *Bhoga*: the afternoon meal
(7) *Sandhyā:* Kṛishṇa leading back the herds at twilight
(8) *Śayana:* putting the image to sleep

It will be noticed that in this daily program as well as in special festivals such as the *Annakuṭ* (see catalog numbers 11-15), the offering of food to the deity is an important feature of worship. This is not merely for the sake of service to God and the desire to please him, but these offerings also have a sacramental role. The taking of food in India is subject to strict and complex rules affecting ritual purity and food of certain types which has been handled by a caste-inferior, or is left over from the meal of another person may cause defilement. This is not so, however, when the leavings from the meal of a husband are consumed by his wife and children, for he is their lord and the power resulting from contagion is beneficial in this case. The leavings of food (*jhuṭh*) from the table of a god are particularly auspicious and become *prasād*. Instead of producing defilement they have an eucharistic quality.

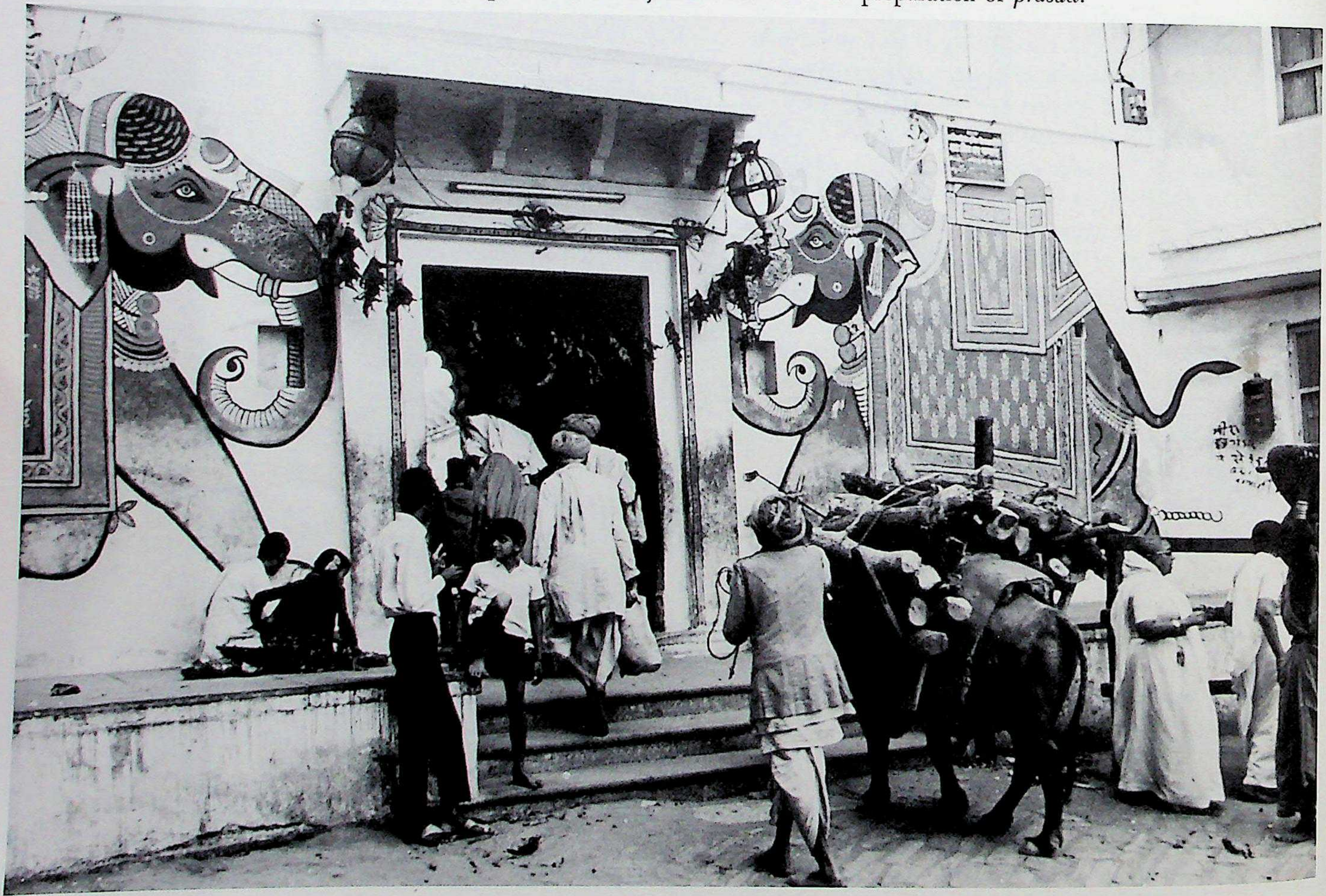
The distribution of food previously offered to the god is a normal procedure in Hindu worship but this *prasād* is often of a very simple nature such as a relatively cheap milk confection, or dried coconut. At Vallabhāchārī shrines, however, enormous care, skill and expense is devoted towards creating an *haute cuisine* worthy of a deity, who not only embodies *rasa*, the pleasure principle, but is the supreme *rasika*, i.e. possessed of perfect discrimination in savoring aesthetic experience. To take *prasād* at an important shrine of this sect is to experience a gastronomic delight as well as to take part in a solemn sacrament. The exquisite variety as well as the quality is indicated by the name *chhappan bhog* 'fifty-six foods' by which the *Annakuṭ* is alternatively known. On this aspect of the worship several thousand rupees may be expended in a single day. Consequently, in the principal *havelīs* such as that of Nāthadwāra, there is a constant flow of activity as food is prepared in very large quantities and this requires a high degree of organization in the provision of fuel (see figure 5) and other necessities of the daily routine.

Similar high standards also prevail in the elaborate decorations contrived for special festivals and in the music with which the god is regaled by accomplished temple musicians. The adherents of this sect have always tended to include members of the wealthy mercantile communities found especially in Western India and this has brought considerable wealth into the hands of the temple administrators. Part of this is expended in charitable activities but there is no parsimony with regard to expenditure on the entertainment and adornment of the deity. His wardrobe and jewelry are not merely of a quality befitting his royal status but also extremely varied and extensive. The garments worn are varied both in their design and color according to prescribed manuals of ritual which take account of his symbolic role on certain days or the exigencies of the climate during particular seasons.

All of these activities require facilities similar to those found in a Rājput court and the *havelīs* are planned accordingly with a series of courtyards in which special festivals take place and many rooms leading off them, which are devoted to specialized functions. Some of these are shrines, and others are used as storerooms, kitchens, offices and living apartments for the *Gosāīṅs* and their dependents, assistants and servants (see plan of the temple of Śrī Nāth-jī at Nāthadwāra, figure 4).

In the chamber where the image is housed (see catalog number 1) there are various furnishings necessary to the daily routine. These include the *siṁhāsana*

Figure 5 Firewood being taken into the temple of Śrī Nāth-jī at Nāthadwāra for preparation of *prasād*.



'lion throne' on which the image is placed with cushions on either side. Steps lead up to the throne and a low table (*pāṭa*) is placed in front. Other table-stools (*chaukīs*) are also placed before the image so that on the central one the game of *pachīsī*, resembling ludo, can be set out on a cross-shaped 'board', which is usually made of embroidered cloth. On the table, or on stands before it are other objects which are normally arranged near the sitting place (*gaddī* or *masṇad*) of a ruler and have become regarded as attributes of status. In the case of Śrī Nāth-jī these include a cloth-covered ewer containing water brought from the river Jumnā and an ornamented box for storing *pān*, i.e. *betel* leaves which are folded over pieces of *areca* nut and various spices as an astringent for chewing. A leaf of *pān* is customarily presented by an Indian of rank at the close of an interview or visit by an inferior as a polite token of dismissal. The objects placed before the image may also include toys, such as model animals, for Kṛishṇa's entertainment as the child adored by his cowherd foster parents and their fellow villagers.

THE USE OF PICHHAVĀĪS

All of these items of furnishing have cloth coverings, which are changed in accordance with the requirements of the ritual. A complete set (*sāja*) of these textiles will include a canopy, matched coverings for the throne, steps, table and stools, named after the items which they cover, and the backcloth, which may either be a complete rectangle (*pichhavāī*) or may have the space occupied by the image cut away from the center, when it is called a *piṭhaka* (see catalog number 10). Images such as Śrī Nāth-jī at Nāthadwāra, which are stone reliefs with a rectangular background, clearly require slightly different treatment from that of three dimensional images, which can be placed on a throne of normal Indian design with the back rising to a point (see catalog numbers 22-23). In Śrī Nāth-jī's case, the surrounding stone is normally covered by a separate inner cloth or with flowers, except in summer when it is left bare for bathing ceremonies such as *Asnān Jātra* and *Panchamṛitsnān*.

As has already been mentioned, these cloth coverings need not be painted, either with pigments or the mordant-resist process (*kalamkārī*) as is shown by the smaller scenes around the edges of the painted *pichhavāīs*, which show the adornment of the image during the seasonal festivals. For many of these occasions, textiles with non-pictorial designs are used. Originally it seems likely that pictorial *pichhavāīs* were used only during a few of the festivals – especially during the monsoon – but there is a growing tendency for the number of painted themes to increase – particularly in the case of subjects celebrated in the vernacular literature of the sect. These include subjects such as the *Mahādān*, a sort of multiple *Dāna Līlā*, in which a sequence of events is represented as though at the same time, and *Giri Kandāra*, in which Kṛishṇa appears with his consort in a cave on Mount Govardhan. The writer has even seen a set in the store of the Śrī Dwārkeśjyoti *havelī* at Baroda, which includes a *pichhavāī* showing the god Śiva on Mount Kailāsa. This *śaivite* subject is used during the celebration of the *Śivarātrī* festival. Needless to say, *pichhavāīs* showing these subjects are invariably modern. Others, depicting such subjects as Kṛishṇa's sports among the lotus-filled waters of the Jumnā (see catalog numbers 19-20) are never very old. A false appearance of age is, however, often given to these textiles simply because of the use to which they are put during worship. This is particularly noticeable in the horizontal portions of the coverings for the throne, which become stained during ceremonies involving lustration, feeding, etc. (see catalog number 22).

It is because of this heavy use to which the *pichhavāīs* are subjected, involving the need for their constant replacement, and also due to the large demand for devotional pictures by pilgrims, that Nāthadwāra, the present headquarters of the cult, has kept traditional Indian painting more active than any other place in India. This town, nestling beside the Banās river in the hills north of Udaipur in Rājāsthān, was an insignificant village until 1671 A.D., when the image of Śrī Nāth-jī was installed there after the Mughal Emperor Aurangzib's iconoclastic destruction of the Mathurā temples two years earlier. Here under the protection of Mahārāṇā Rāj Siṅgh of Mewāṛ, the original village of Siṅhāṛ developed into a thriving pilgrim center under its new name, which means 'portal of the lord'. In the course of time, the practitioners of various crafts such as painters, enamelers, musical instrument makers, textile printers, toy makers, perfume manufacturers, etc., came and settled there in order to serve the shrine and produce articles for sale to the many pilgrims who throng the town's narrow streets.

The painters are one of the most important of these craft communities and number between 150 and 300 persons divided between forty to fifty extended families. These are divided into two main castes, the *Gauṛ* and *Jāṅgīṛ*, who claim to be *Brāhmiṇs* and to have migrated from Udaipur in the first case and Jaipur and Jodhpur in the second. A third group, the *Purbia*, claims to have migrated from Delhi and Alwar. These alleged places of origin are not at all unlikely in the light of the stylistic characteristics of Nāthadwāra paintings but as no serious stylistic analysis of the school has been attempted so far, definite conclusions would be premature. It is equally uncertain to what extent painted hangings were used by the sect before the move to Nāthadwāra, since the earliest known surviving examples of *pichhavāīs* post-date that event. Nāthadwāra has certainly been the chief place of their origin in recent times but examples do exist which should definitely be ascribed to other centers (see catalog number 2) and these appear on the whole to be earlier in date than most of the examples from the headquarters of the cult.

To distinguish its characteristic stylistic features, it is necessary to consider Nāthadwāra painting in relation to Indian painting as a whole and in doing this one becomes aware that the religious and literary movement, of which Vallabhāchārya's cult forms a part, played an important role in the development of Indian painting at about the time when Vallabha lived. The 15th and 16th centuries were a period of acute religious ferment and revival as Hinduism began to recover in the North from the shock sustained by the collapse of the Hindu dynasties following the Muslim conquest. The great era of religious patronage by powerful rulers was over and the revival of Hinduism could only take place on a popular level. Although the Muslim invasions of several centuries earlier had proved a powerful setback, a *modus vivendi* gradually developed between Muslims and Hindus. Despite their apparently irreconcilable differences over polytheism and idolatry the two religions began to fertilize each other in the field of mysticism, where the Muslim *ṣūfīs* and Hindu *bhaktas* found that they had much in common.

A similar synthesis was also developing in other fields such as the arts, where language, music, architecture and painting were undergoing changes as a result of the new influences brought in from Persia and Turkistan. The chief representative of North Indian painting at this time was a type of manuscript illustration that was being prepared for the Jain sect and mainly localized in Gujarāt, Central India and Rājāsthān. These pictures were executed in a very angular, schematic style, mainly using primary colors, with little attempt at naturalism. The subjects tended to be repeated over and over again as wealthy members of the sect vied with each other in making pious donations of illustrated texts. This constant repetition, together with the conservatism inherent within such religious art, led to highly conventionalized picture-making but within these conventions the artists were capable of developing very lively and sensitive standards of drawing.

Although Jains appear to have been the principal patrons of this art we already find vernacular works dealing with Kṛishṇa's childhood being illustrated about a generation before Vallabha's birth and, as we have seen already, the devotional literature generated by his sect was soon to play an important part in the development of vernacular poetry. Dealing as it did with the exploits of Kṛishṇa's boyhood, as well as his erotic relationships, this literature had a secular as well as a religious appeal. Much of it was in lyric form and presented the episodes of Kṛishṇa's life briefly and with a wealth of descriptive imagery that provided ideal subject matter for pictorial illustration.

It is also from the period of Vallabha's lifetime, that we find evidence of paintings again being produced under court patronage but this time for Muslim rulers, such as the contemporary sultan of Mālwā. These paintings show that Indian artists were being stimulated by contact with the refined and relatively naturalistic art of Persian manuscript illustration and the resulting synthesis was as ideally suited to representing Hindu poetry as the poetry itself was to pictorial realization. A few surviving works of Vallabha's lifetime, such as a splendid dispersed copy of his favorite scripture, the *Bhāgavāta Purāṇa*, show the new style in all its vigor and there is no doubt that this represents the earliest and most spirited phase of what later became known as Rājāsthānī painting.

The subsequent development of Rājāsthānī painting is now becoming relatively well understood, at least in its general outlines. The reign of the Mughal Emperor Akbar (1556-1605) brought an end to the political uncertainties of the 15th and 16th centuries as more and more of the subcontinent became united under a tolerant administration which permitted economic progress and allowed the Hindu rulers of Rājāsthān to reach a more satisfactory accommodation with the central authority. As befitted an important member of a cultured dynasty, Akbar encouraged the art of painting and employed more than a hundred painters in his studio, where they were given a sound training under Persian masters and had opportunities of seeing and copying European engravings. Since many of these recruits were already trained as artists in the styles mentioned above, the new Mughal school was not entirely a departure from the native tradition. It did, however, vastly extend the means available for painters to depict incidents in a dramatic and convincing manner.

During the 17th century, when the compliment of the royal studio was reduced, some of these advances in pictorial technique were fed back into Rājāsthān as artists drifted back from the imperial service to that of provincial rulers. This gave a great impetus to painting in the kingdoms of Rājput rulers, where a number of local schools grew up with individual characteristics. In some of these schools, especially that of Bikāner, Mughal influence predominated but it is really quite remarkable how rapidly Mughal-trained artists in some places reverted in style to the essential characteristics of the pre-Mughal Hindu school. Even where Mughal pictorial conventions were preserved, the Rājāsthānī styles of areas such as Mewāṛ, Būndi and Central India, achieved a joyful spontaneity and lyrical mode of expression that had more in common with its early 16th century precursors than with the more worldly and academic art of the Mughal court.

Whereas Mughal artists excelled in verisimilitude — especially in portraiture — where, for example, an eye with its wrinkled lids and world-weary glance mirrored the individual personality of the sitter, the Rājput painter painted it with the flowing curves of a lotus petal and thus faithfully transcribed a poetic metaphor. A cursory examination of the Nāthadwāra *pichhavāīs* will show quite clearly to which of these two traditions they belong for these are not designed to flatter a secular patron with the meticulae of connoisseurship but to usher the viewer into the eternal

Bṛindāban where only ideal values prevail. For the mind steeped in the poems that are sung in the shrines where they are exhibited, the pictorial details are enriched by metaphorical associations that affect the viewer's perception both at the conscious and subconscious levels. The bees, which flit from lotus to lotus in paintings of the *Jal Vihār* (see catalog numbers 19 and 20) recall to mind the poetic images of writers like Sūr Dās in which Kṛishṇa is compared with a bee and the *gopīs* with lotuses. It does not matter that the association is not specifically intended in this case, for such images are such an integral part of both the paintings and the literature as a whole that the two forms of expression work together in their aesthetic and emotional effect.

Whether or not artists from the Mathurā region accompanied the cult to Nāthadwāra in the late 17th century, there seems little doubt that the major influence on the style, as we know it at present, is that of late 17th and 18th century Mewāṛ painting, which had the nearby city of Udaipur as its center. It is possible to see the more formal, Mughal-influenced, precision of the Jaipur school in some *pichhavāīs* and the ebullient exaggerations of certain Būndi, Kotāh or Jodhpur artists in some others but in fact many of these variations also occur within the vast output of the Mewāṛ school itself. The question also arises as to whether the Kishangāṛh school, with its refined mannerisms such as an unusually curved and elongated treatment of the eye, was either a source of *pichhavāīs* or an influence upon Nāthadwāra painting. The Kishangāṛh rulers have been ardent followers of the *Pushṭi Mārg* and maintain an *havelī* in the city palace. Whatever influence may or may not have stemmed from Kishangāṛh in the past, the popularity of this school of painting among modern collectors has had a profound, and largely unfortunate, effect on the work of present day Nāthadwāra artists, who supplement their traditional sources of income by making fakes.

Apart from such recent developments in stylistic migration, the study of inscribed works proves that artists of earlier times often moved about carrying regional idioms from place to place or modified their style during different phases of their careers, either to suit the whims of particular patrons or for other reasons which cannot now be determined. As the American anthropologist, Ron Maduro, has discovered from field work in Nāthadwāra itself, the artist working in a so-called anonymous tradition will often put far more of his individual personality into his work than some of the pioneers of Indian art history were disposed to admit.

With regard to the chronology of the *pichhavāīs* it has to be admitted that we have very little firm ground for achieving precision apart from our knowledge of what is being done today and the ability to make comparisons with Rājāsthānī miniature paintings, for which some sort of chronological evidence often exists. The latter method has to be approached with some caution, since the conservative nature of icon painting generally leads to the preservation of archaisms after they have been outmoded in a more secular context. The ideal world of Bṛindāban remains eternal, whereas the courts of the Rājput princes have been overtaken by history.

Nevertheless, even representation of Śrī Nāth-jī himself have shown some concessions to the encroachment of the modern world. A particular instance of this is the changed method of depicting the feet of the image, which was introduced during the modernizing pontificate of Goswāmī Govardhan Lāl-jī, who acceded to the *gaddī* at Nāthadwāra in 1876. During this time the old method of showing the feet splayed sideways began to be replaced by the technique of foreshortening (see catalog numbers 1, 7, 9 and 19). On the oral testimony of Rai Krishna Dasa, this innovation was suggested by the celebrated poet Bharatendu Harishchandra, who died in 1885 at the premature age of 35 years. It is not likely, therefore, that any *pichhavāī* showing this feature can be dated before c. 1880.

Another valuable chronological aid is provided by an unpublished *pichhavāī* in the Bhārat Kalā Bhāvan, Benāres, which bears a dated inscription. This date has previously been accepted as V. S. 1804 = 1747 A.D. but in the opinion of the writer the second digit of the date is definitely a 9, which places the painting in the year 1847 A.D. Judging from this and other evidence it seems that some *pichhavāīs* hitherto attributed to the first half of the 19th century belong, in fact, to the late 19th or even early 20th century.

The mystery of the earlier and very beautiful *pichhavāīs*, which employ gold and silver together with pigments on a dark blue or red ground, remains to be solved (see catalog number 2). Indian dealers have reported them as having been found in both the Deccan, where the sect has few adherents, and in Gujarāt, where it has always flourished. Some of them, especially one which includes Kṛishṇa playing the flute (now in the Calico Museum of Textiles, Ahmedābād), have clear affinities with the late 17th century Golconda and 18th century Hyderābād schools of painting. The evidence in favor of this provenance is not yet conclusive but we may not have to wait long for more confirmation. Other rare types of pigment painted, wax printed and resist dyed *pichhavāīs* are clearly of very great interest but fall outside the scope of this exhibition.

For the present day viewer of these noble and visually exciting hangings it is difficult to credit the degree of opprobrium that was cast upon the Vallabha *sampradāya* a century ago by the protagonists of Victorian morality. By contrast with Col. James Tod's warm support for the sect and personal friendship with its chief priest in the early years of the century, Victorian writers on Hinduism universally condemned Vallabha's doctrines in terms of the strongest disapproval. Even the great sanskṛitist, Sir Monier Monier-Williams, wrote that 'their devotion to Kṛishṇa and his wives degenerated into the most corrupt practices, and their system became rotten to the core'. These outbursts of righteous indignation were provoked by the public exposure of certain incidents in Bombay which moralists of the time were unable to stomach, but the whole attack on the sect by Indian as well as European publicists was bitterly and, to a large extent, unjustly prejudiced. The doctrines which fell under the strongest criticism were the beliefs that Vallabha and his successors were reincarnations of Kṛishṇa and that an initiate's vows, dedicating his body, mind and possessions (including wife and children) to God, were to be taken literally and were subject to inevitable abuse.

By contrast with these vitriolic opinions, the present writer can recall the many admirable members of the sect whom he has been privileged to meet and in some cases, count among his friends. True piety is a very common attribute of present day Vallabhāchārīs and sweetness of temperament seems characteristic of the community as a whole. It is difficult to believe that these people and their religious leaders are radically different from their grandparents. In particular, there is the indelible impression of one devotee, whose features, observed during worship in a small *havelī* some years ago, radiated the most saintly expression that it would be possible for one to meet anywhere within human experience. There seems little doubt that the calculated employment of arts, such as music and painting, in the ritual of the *Pushṭi Mārg*, played an important part in elevating its more sensitive followers to a pitch of devotional intensity that could only enrich the spiritual values of their community as a whole. This in turn may also have contributed to an aesthetic achievement to which even non-Hindus are bound to respond.

Robert Skelton

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PLATES

The arrangement of the *pichhavāīs* in the exhibition does not take account of chronological or stylistic factors but in general follows the sequence of events of the Kṛishṇa legend within the months of the year. The exceptions are catalog number 1, which illustrates the function of the hangings within the shrine and catalog numbers 19 - 21 which represent an extension of the traditional range of subject matter.

The majority of painted *pichhavāīs* are designed for use during the autumn and particularly commemorate episodes related to Kṛishṇa's activities during this season. Originally it seems that their use may have been restricted to the months of the monsoon, which probably accounts for the fact that the earliest example in the exhibition (catalog number 2) depicts the rainy season.

Temple hanging photographs Courtesy Karl Mann, New York.

Height precedes width/all dimensions in inches.

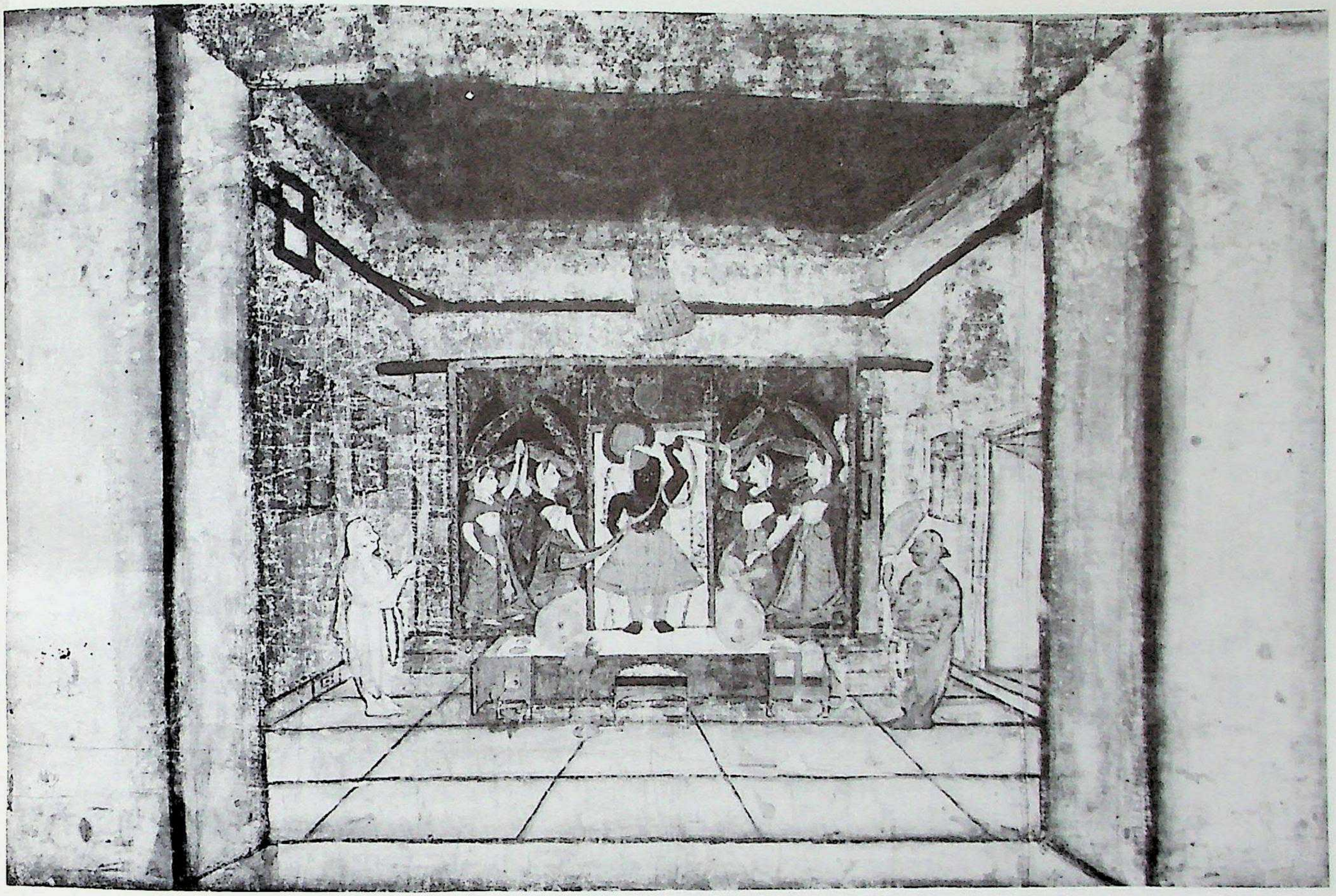
1. ŚARAT PURṆAMĀ (the autumn full moon)

A view of the main shrine in the temple at Nāthadwāra showing two priests attending the image of Śrī Nāth-jī, which is dressed in a skirt (*kachhnī*), trousers (*pāījāma*), scarf (*dopaṭṭā*), and headdress with a turban ornament of peacock feathers. The image stands on a throne platform (*siṁhāsana*) draped with a painted cloth of the same name (see catalog numbers 22-23). The stone surround of the image is concealed by a small white cloth and behind it hangs a larger *pichhavāī* depicting four *gopīs* saluting Kṛishṇa against a background of mango, *kadamba* and plantain trees (see catalog numbers 6-10).

The *pichhavāī* is supported by a wooden beam which crosses the shrine from wall to wall. Above is a canopy from which a cloth fan hangs over the image. In front of the throne pedestal (*siṁhāsana* or *gaddī*) is a stool (*chaukī*) on which a board for the game, *pachīsī*, can be laid out.

Size: 26 x 42

Nāthadwāra, late 19th or early 20th century



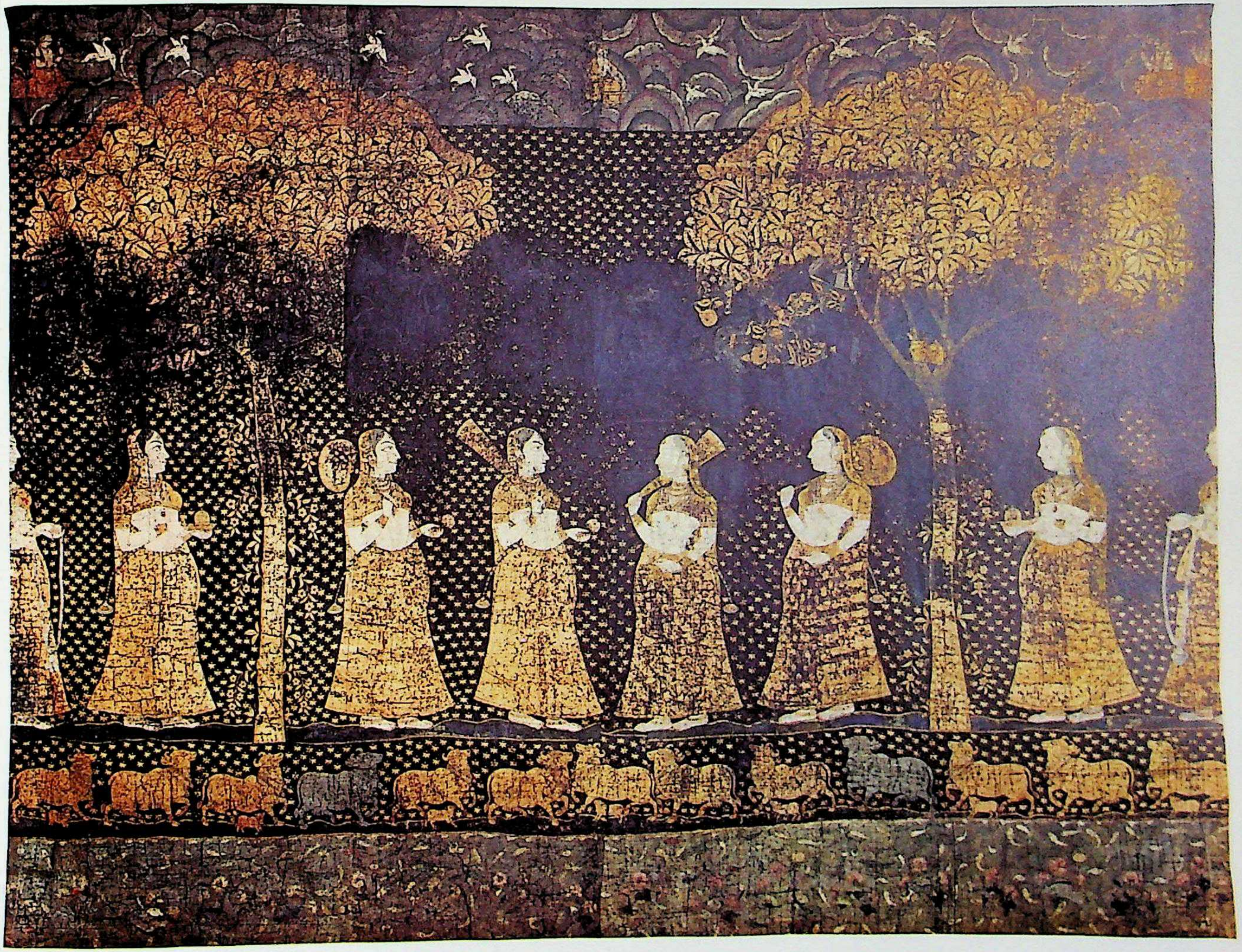
2. VARSHĀ (the rainy season)

Eight *gopīs* stand facing inwards in two groups of four, in attendance on Kṛishṇa who is not depicted. The center pair hold peacock feather fans (*morchhal*), the pair outside them hold palm leaf fans, the next carry betel boxes on trays (*pāndān*) and the outer pair hold garlands. The two central pairs also carry flower offerings in their left hands. In the center of each group is a *kadamba* tree with peacocks perched in their branches. A row of cows, including calves, stands below the *gopīs* and the river Jumnā with fish and waterfowl moving among lotuses is shown at the bottom. In the sky, egrets fly among the thunder clouds and divinities in aerial chariots on either side rain down flowers, which diaper the background.

The *pichhavāī* is executed in gold and silver with additional pigments on dark blue cotton. It is not clear whether this was made for use in any particular festival but *Janmāshtamī* – one of the most important festivals for members of this sect – falls within the rainy season. The *pichhavāī* might, therefore, be appropriate for Kṛishṇa's birthday.

Size: 94 x 122

Gujarāt or Deccan, 18th century



3. DĀNA LĪLĀ (the demanding of toll)

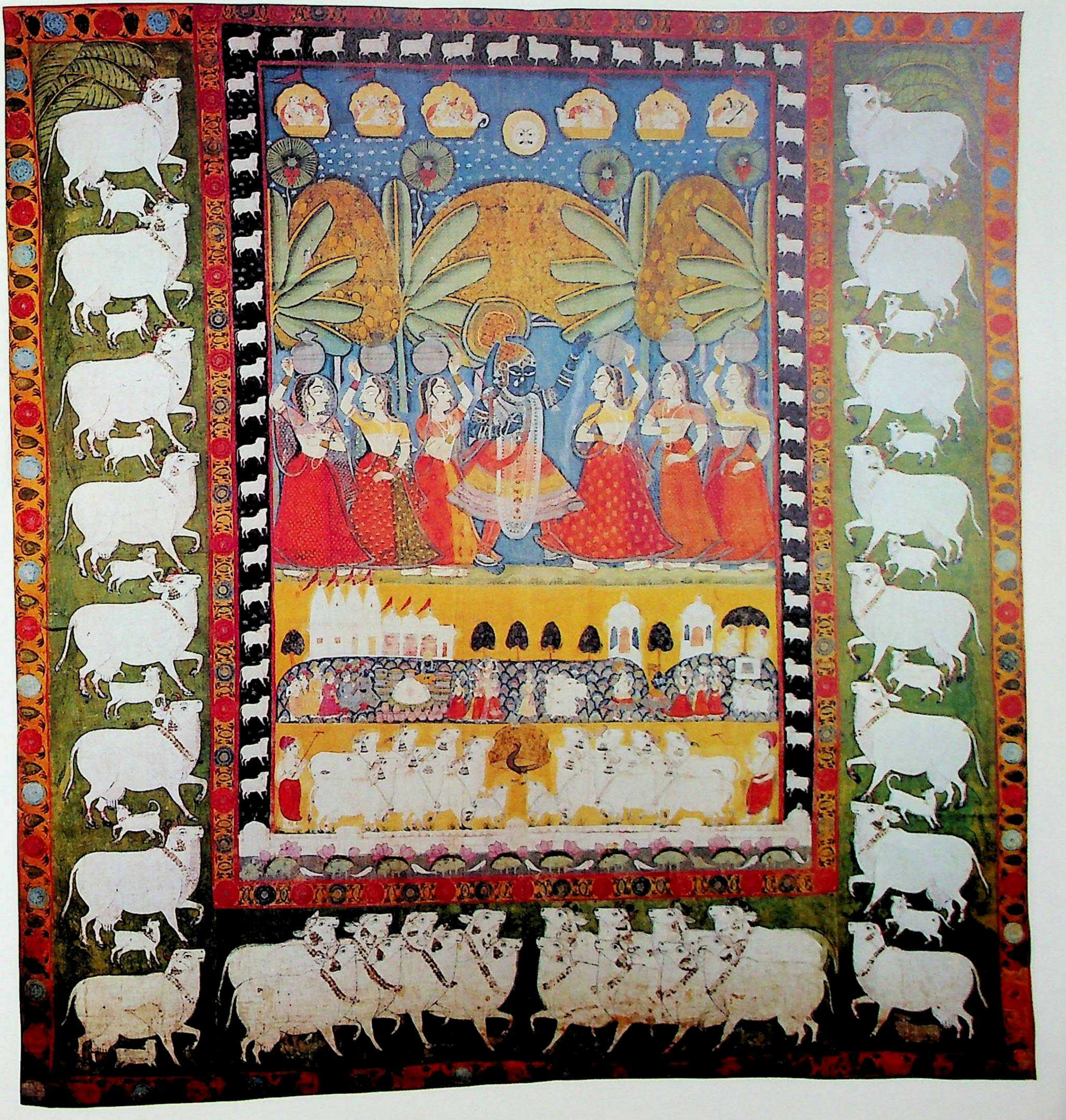
Kṛishṇa tips curds from a pot carried by a *gopī* as she and her five companions take their produce to market. The incident takes place against a background of trees while celestials drop flowers from their aerial chariots above. Underneath this, Mount Govardhan is depicted with the *Dāna Līlā* again shown on the right and the *Govardhan pūjā* on the left. Below this by the *Jumnā Ghāt* a peacock dances in the center of a group of adoring cattle, evidently as a symbolic representation of Kṛishṇa, who shares its blue color and wears peacock feathers in his headdress.

Around the top and sides of the panel are rows of cows against a black background. Another row of cows and calves from an earlier *pichhavāī* has been added to the sides and bottom.

Size without addition: 74 x 55

Size of whole: 91 x 87

Nāthadwāra, early 20th century – the added portion, late 19th century



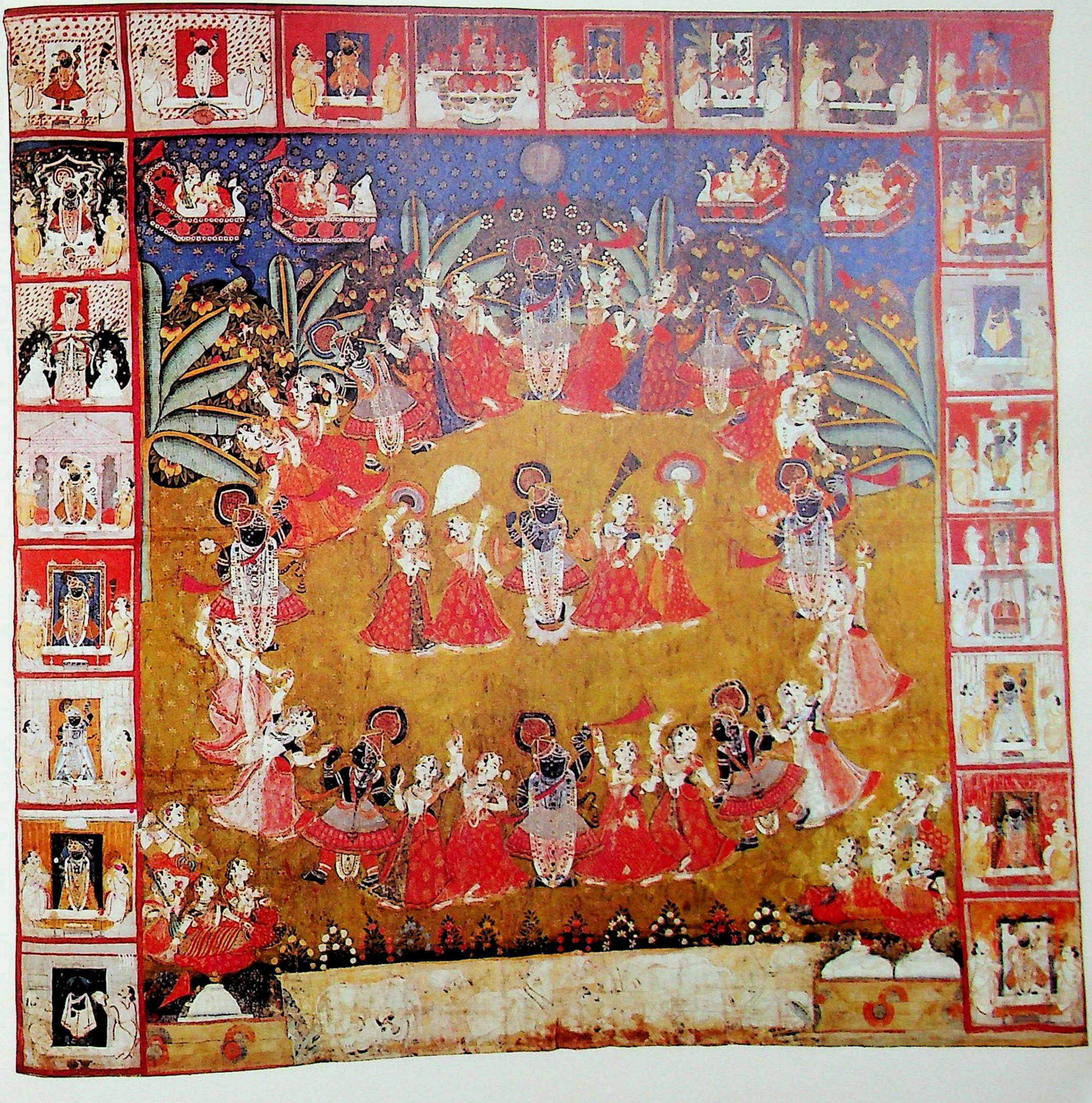
4. RĀSA LĪLĀ (the festive dance)

Kṛishṇa appears eight times dancing with alternate pairs of *gopīs* in a circle around a central group formed by himself playing the flute with two *gopīs* on each side holding fans and fly whisks. At the four cardinal points of the circle Kṛishṇa is represented by Śrī Nāth-jī and the central figure can perhaps be equated with his image as Śrī Madanmohan-jī. At either side below the circle other *gopīs* provide music for the dance and above in the star-filled sky celestial chariots carry *gandharvas* and the deities Śiva and Brahmā with their consorts. The foreground, which is rubbed and partly missing, shows cattle against a yellow ground with pavilions on either side.

Around the central scene are small panels showing the adornment of the Nāthadwāra image during the seasonal festivals. These are in an unusually confused order, as follows: (1) missing (2) *Asnān Jātrā* (3) *Narasiṁha Chaturdaśī* (4) *Rath Jātrā* (5) *Rādhāshṭamī* (6) *Rāma Navamī* (7) *Phūl Ḍol* (8) *Kunj Ekādaśī* (9) *Pāṭ Utsava* (10) *Vasant Utsava* (11) *Gosāīṅ kā Utsava* (12) *Annakuṭ* (13) *Janmāshtamī* (14) *Śarat Purṇamā* (15) *Dasahrā* (16) *Prabodhinī* (17) *Gopāshṭamī* (18) *Panchamṛitsnān* (19) *Vāmana Dvādaśī* (20) *Ṭhakurānī Tīj* (21) *Pavitrā Ekādaśī* (22) *Rākhī Bandhan* (23) *Āchārya kā Utsava* (24) missing. The two missing panels were presumably illustrations of *Akhya Tīj* and *Dāna Ekādaśī* and the portraits of Gosāīṅ-jī and Āchārya-jī are doubtless lost also. The lower left panel (2) showing the bathing of Śrī Nāth-jī depicts the rear wall of the Nāthadwāra shrine, which is normally covered by *pichhavāīs* during other festivals. It shows pairs of rectangular niches on either side of the image and the red pole from which *pichhavāīs* are normally hung. Here it is used to hang cloths (*rūmāls*) used during the bathing ceremony.

Size: 73 x 75

Nāthadwāra, c. 2nd quarter of the 19th century



5. RĀSA LĪLĀ (the festive dance)

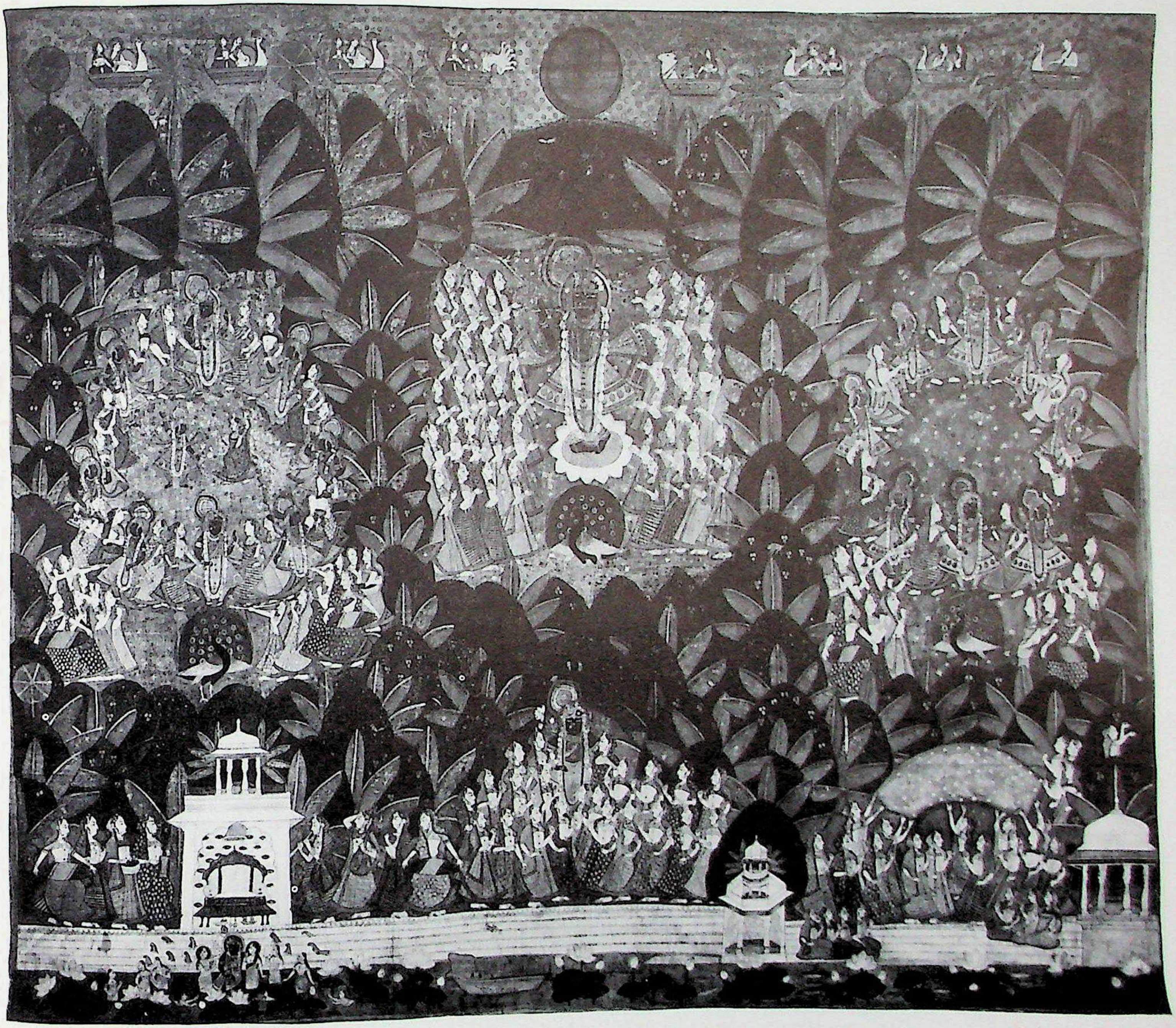
This large *pichhavāī* shows simultaneously a number of episodes in Kṛishṇa's sports with the *gopīs* in the wooded glades by the edge of the Jumnā. The central scene shows Kṛishṇa playing the flute with groups of entranced *gopīs* on either side of him. To the right and left of this are two different enactments of the circular dance (*Rāsa Maṇḍala*). On the left, Kṛishṇa dances with two *gopīs* between each of his eight manifestations, while he and Rādhā dance together in the center. On the right, he dances with a single *gopī* between each of his eight appearances. In both cases *gopīs* provide music for the dance and in the foreground of each of the three incidents a peacock struts as a metaphorical allusion to Kṛishṇa's presence.

In the foreground, we see the *Jumnā Ghāt* lined with steps and pavilions. At the left Kṛishṇa has descended from a throne pavilion where the *gopīs* have been regaling him with music and he frolics in the water with their companions (*Jal Vihār*). In the center of the bank he stands with a large group of girls crowding around him while at the right the *gopīs* re-enact his feat of raising Mount Govardhan by holding a *sāṛī* above their heads while one plays the part of Kṛishṇa.

The various *līlās* take place in the autumn moonlight with gods and celestial beings in eight chariots raining flowers upon the participants below.

Size: 96 x 112

Nāthadwāra, late 19th or early 20th century



6. ŚARAT PURṆAMĀ (the autumn full moon)

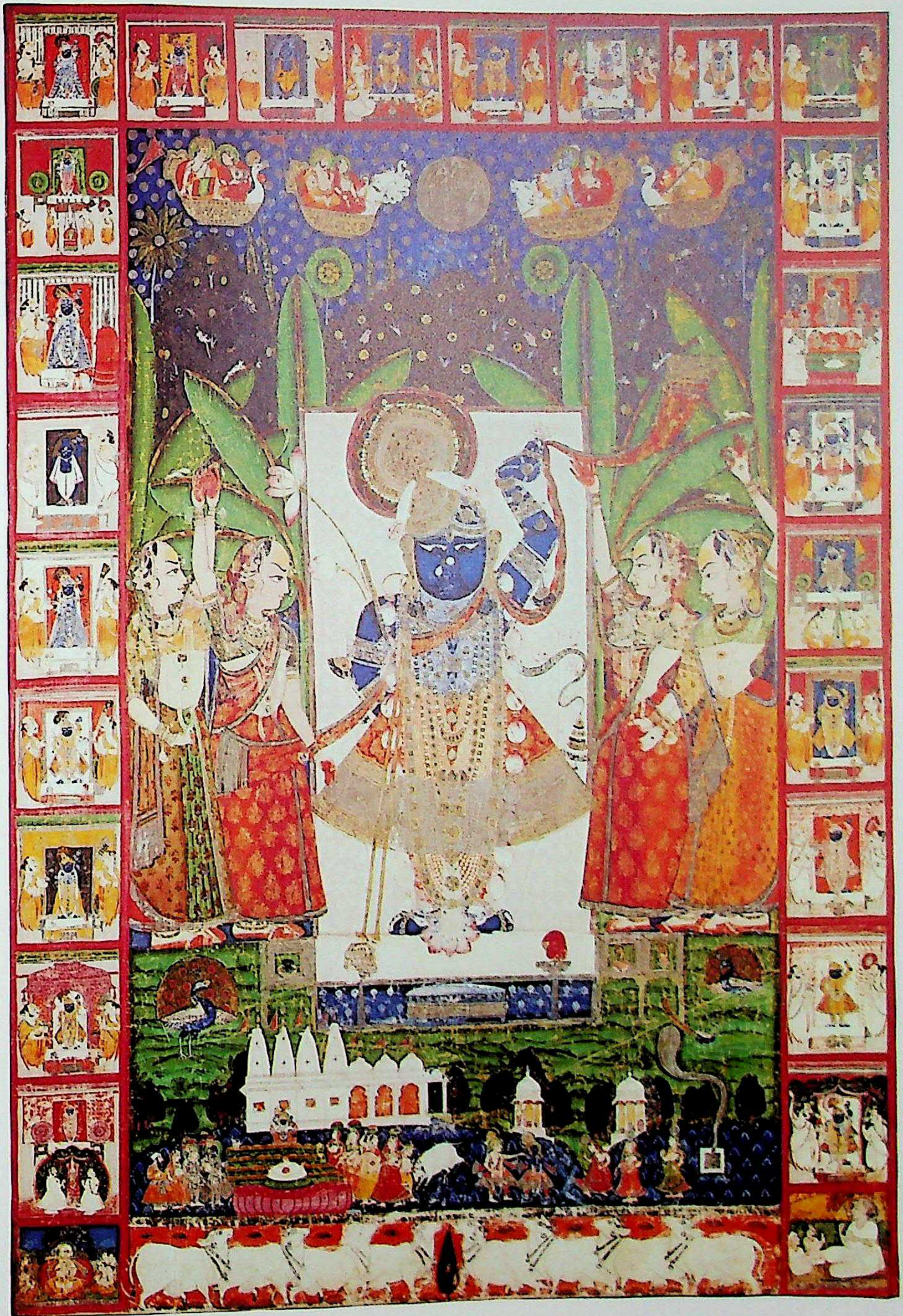
Śrī Nāth-jī stands on the *siṁhāsana* with a white curtain (the color of moonlight) hiding the back of his image. He is dressed in an orange *kachhnī* and its accompanying garments. Two *gopīs* on each side acclaim him with raised arms. The setting is a grove in Bṛindāban, with a background of plantain, mango, *kadamba* and palm trees. Above in the moonlit sky are celestial chariots containing a *gandharva* couple, the gods Indra and Śiva with their consorts and the sage Nārada holding his *vīna*.

Below the throne is Mount Govardhan with *Govardhan pūjā* taking place at the left and a *gopa* being attacked by a bull, who is evidently the demon, Arishṭa, who was subsequently killed by Kṛishṇa. To the right of this is the *Dāna Līlā* episode and a tank being filled with water. This is probably a large tank called the Mānasi Gangā, which fills seasonally, and dries up in the summer. At the foot of the *pichhavāī* is a row of cattle on either side of a cypress tree.

Around the central scene are twenty-six small panels as follows (1) Śrī Gosāīṅ-jī with disciples; (2-25) seasonal festivals in order commencing with *Phūl Ḍol* except for the misplacement of (4) *Narasiṁha Chaturdaśī* after *Rāma Navamī* instead of (6) *Akhya Tīj*; (26) Śrī Vallabhāchārya-jī with disciples.

Size: 56 x 40

Nāthadwāra, c. mid-19th century



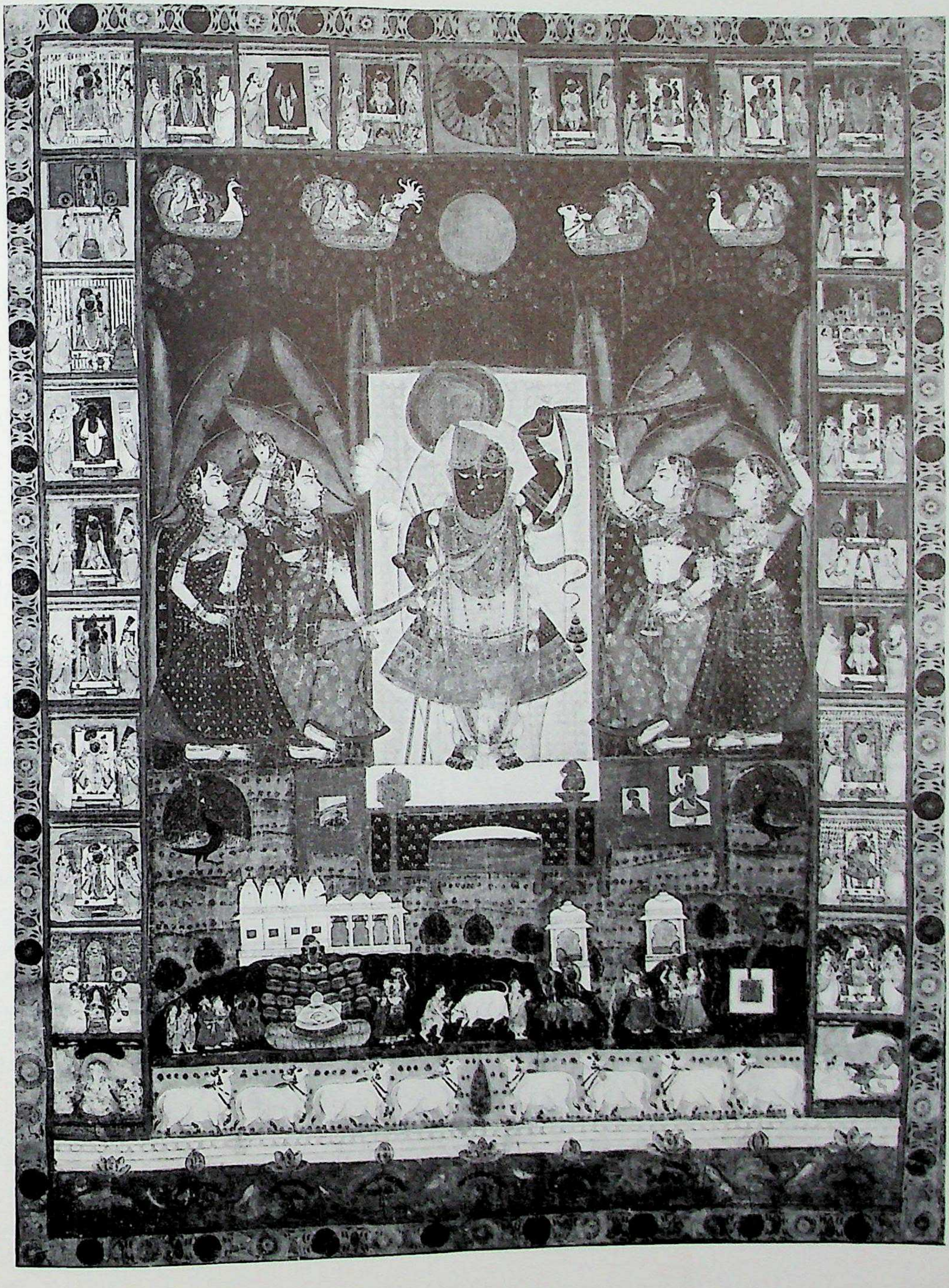
7. ŚARAT PURṆAMĀ (the autumn full moon)

Except in style the center panel differs little from that of catalog number 6 but the feet of Śrī Nāth-jī are here facing forwards instead of sideways, indicating a later date. The details of the throne with its vessels and subordinate images are more clearly depicted. The cloth which covers the plinth, as in catalog number 6, is decorated to show the clear star filled sky of the autumn nights when the festival is held. The stone-edged *Jumnā Ghāt* is shown at the bottom of the panel.

Surrounding the main scene are twenty-seven smaller ones of which the first and last represent Gosāīṅ-jī and Āchārya-jī with disciples and the central one (14) shows Vishṇu as a child floating on a *pīpal* leaf on the eternal waters. The remaining panels (2-13 and 15-26) show the twenty-four seasonal festivals in their correct order from *Phūl Ḍol* to *Kunj Ekādaśi.*

Size: 77 x 59

Nāthadwāra, late 19th or early 20th century



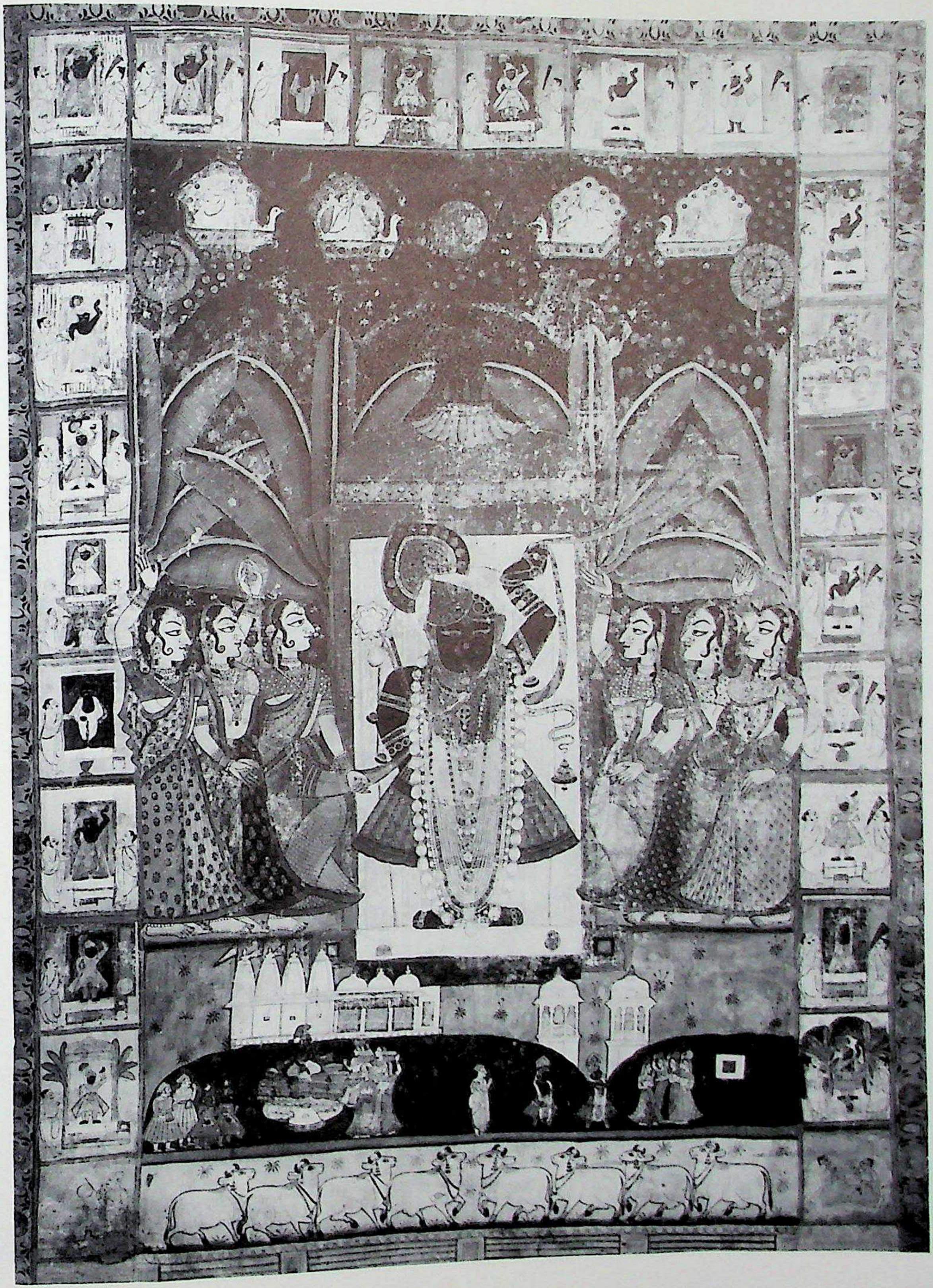
8. ŚARAT PURṆAMĀ (the autumn full moon)

The central scene is essentially the same as that of the two preceding but in this case Śrī Nāth-jī stands within a silver pavilion, the *chaukī* is not represented and the number of *gopīs* has been increased to six. The feet of Śrī Nāth-jī are splayed sideways but the *pichhavāī* is not likely to be significantly earlier than catalog number 7, which employs the later convention.

There are twenty-six small panels around the central scene commencing with Gosāīṅ-jī and disciples (2) *Rāma Navamī* (3) *Gosāīṅ kā Utsava* (4) *Akhya Tīj* (5) *Asnān Jātrā* (6) *Phūl Ḍol* (7) *Āchārya kā Utsava* (8-19) in correct sequence from *Rath Jātrā* to *Annakuṭ* (20) *Prabodhinī* (21) *Gopāshṭamī* (22) *Vasant* (23) *Pāṭ Utsava* (24) *Narasiṁha Chaturdaśī* (25) *Kunj Ekādaśī* (26) *Āchārya-jī* with disciples.

Size: 75 x 57

Nāthadwāra, late 19th or early 20th century



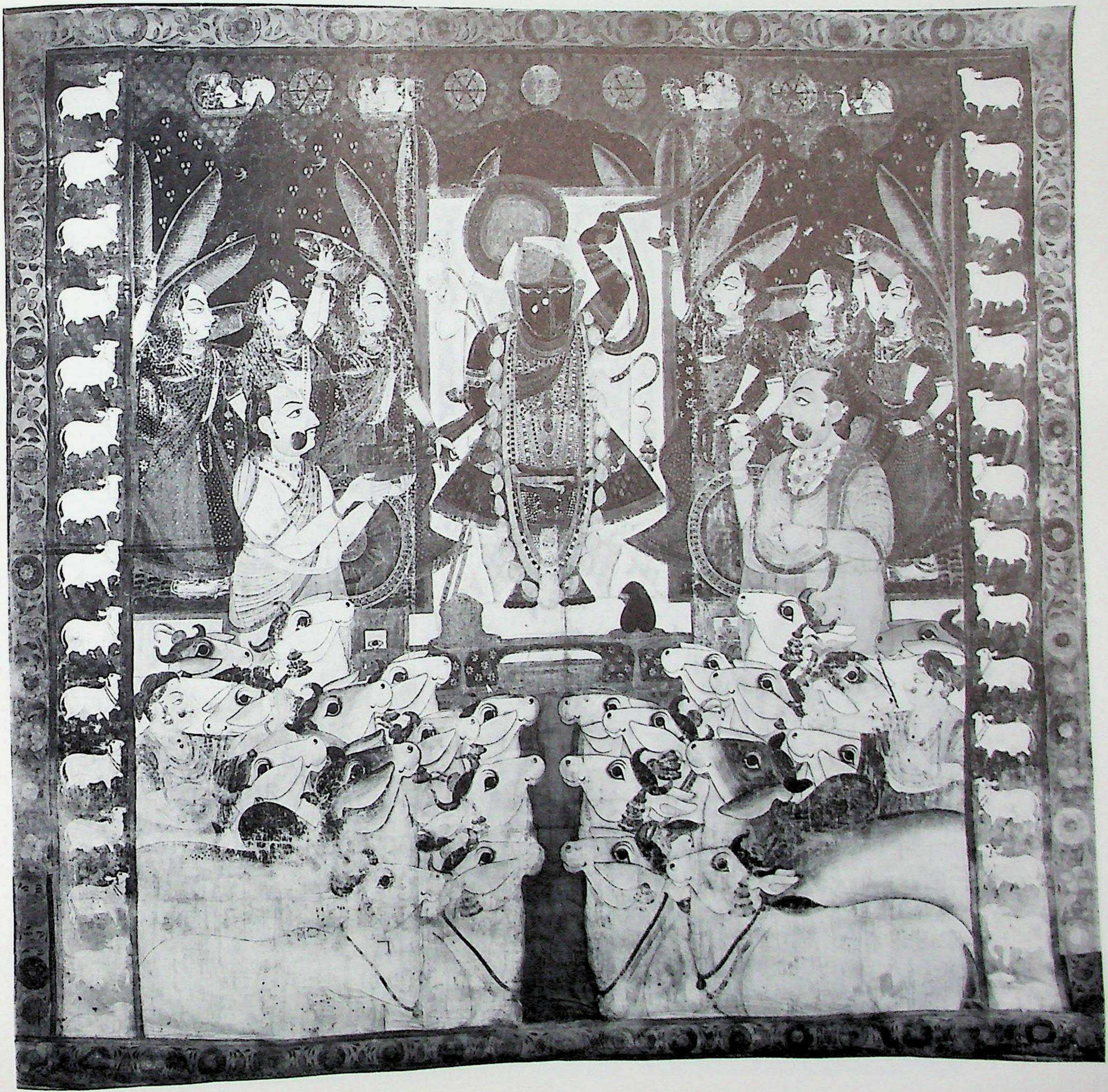
9. ŚARAT PURṆAMĀ (the autumn full moon)

Śrī Nāth-jī stands before a white *pichhavāī* against a background of trees. Although its roof is not shown (cf. catalog number 16) the locus is in fact the Nāthadwāra temple, as indicated by the two shrines at Śrī Nāth-jī's feet containing a garlanded *śālagrāma* and the image of Navanītapriyā-jī. In front of the main image, on stands, are the *pāndān* and covered vessel of Jumnā water with the *chaukī* between them. Three *gopīs* on either side of the image raise their arms to throw flowers and in front of them are two priests with *āratī* lamp and fan. The foreground is filled with decorated cattle attended by two *gopas*. At the top in the moonlit sky are celestial chariots containing (from left to right) Indra, Brahmā, and Śiva, with their consorts and Nārada with another *rishī*.

On either side of the panel is a vertical row of cattle against a band of blue, spangled with stars, or perhaps florets. The presence of the cattle in this *pichhavāī* could suggest its use for *Gopāshṭami*, when a white backcloth and similar dress are used for the image. However, the scene clearly takes place in the moonlight, the *gopīs* are present and the starlit sky is also depicted on the cloth at the foot of the shrine.

Size: 77 x 79

Nāthadwāra, early 20th century

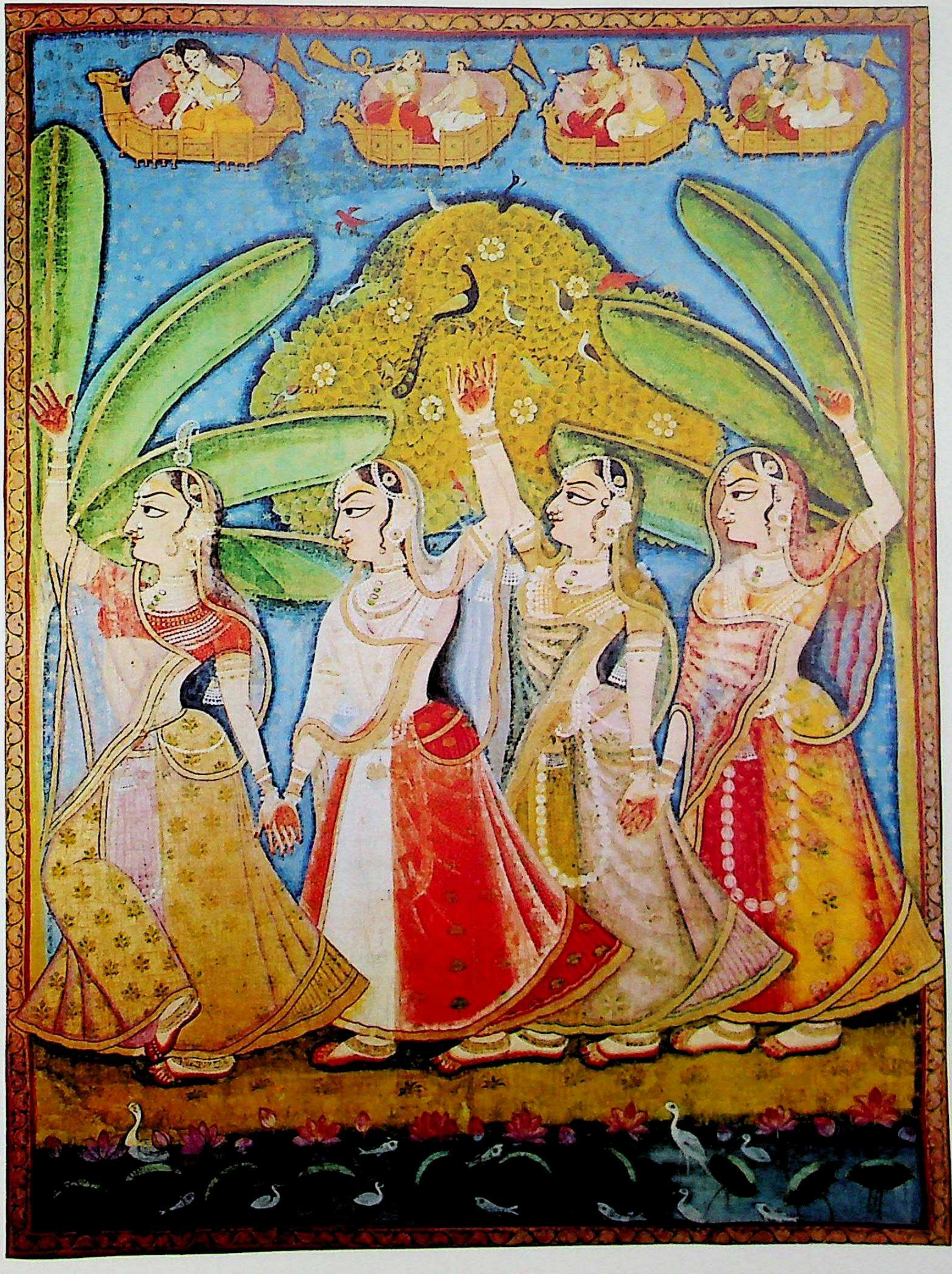


10. ŚARAT PURṆAMĀ (the autumn full moon)

The right half of a *piṭhaka* showing four *gopīs* facing left as though dancing with joined hands alternately raised and lowered. The background is of plantains flanking a *kadamba* tree against a starlit sky in which there are four celestial chariots containing divine couples. In the foreground is the river Jumnā with water birds among flowering lotuses.

Size: 76 x 58

Nāthadwāra, 2nd quarter of the 19th century



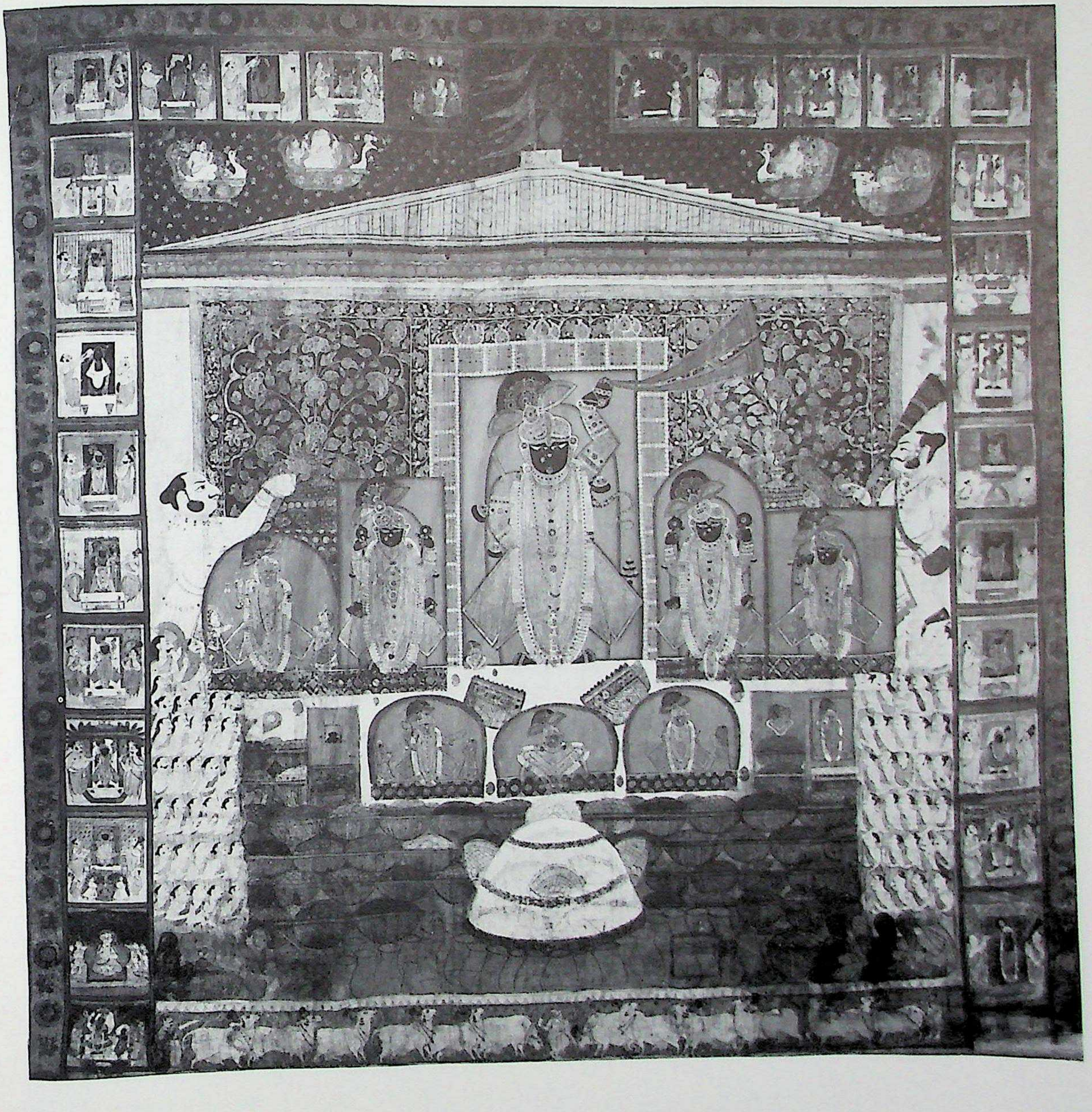
11. ANNAKUṬ (the mountain of food)

The image of Śrī Nāth-jī and six other manifestations of Kṛishṇa installed in the *havelī* at Nāthadwāra with a pile of rice and leaf baskets of food and earthenware vessels set before them. The images are (back row, from left to right): Śrī Madanmohan-jī; Śrī Mathureś-jī; Śrī Nāth-jī; Śrī Dvārkānāth-jī; Śrī Gokulchandramā-jī; (bottom row): Śrī Gokulnāth-jī; Śrī Navanītapriyā-jī; and Śrī Viṭṭhalnāth-jī and duplicate images of Śrī Navanītapriyā-jī and Śrī Madanmohan-jī, who are permanently installed at Nāthadwāra, where they serve as proxies for Śrī Nāth-jī at certain festivals. A priest stands on either side, one performing *āratī* with a lamp, the other holding a *morchhal.* Male and female devotees occupy the sides of the courtyard and the foreground contains a row of cows and *gopas.* In the starlit sky are celestial chariots containing the sage Nārada, Brahmā and his consort, another divine couple and Śiva and Parvatī.

Surrounding the main subject are thirty smaller panels which depict (commencing at the bottom left) (1) Balarāma with a priest and a *gopī* (2) Śrī Viṭṭhalnāth-jī (3 - 14) seasonal festivals in sequence from *Phūl Ḍol* to *Janmāshṭamī* (15) the raising of Mount Govardhan (16) Kṛishṇa in the cave (*Giri Kandarā*) (17-28) seasonal festivals from *Rādhāshṭamī* to *Kunj Ekādaśī* (29) *Banjātra Parva* (30) cut off but presumably Śrī Vallabhāchārya-jī. These panels have been labeled in *devanāgarī* characters.

Size: 82 x 88

Nāthadwāra, c. 1870-80



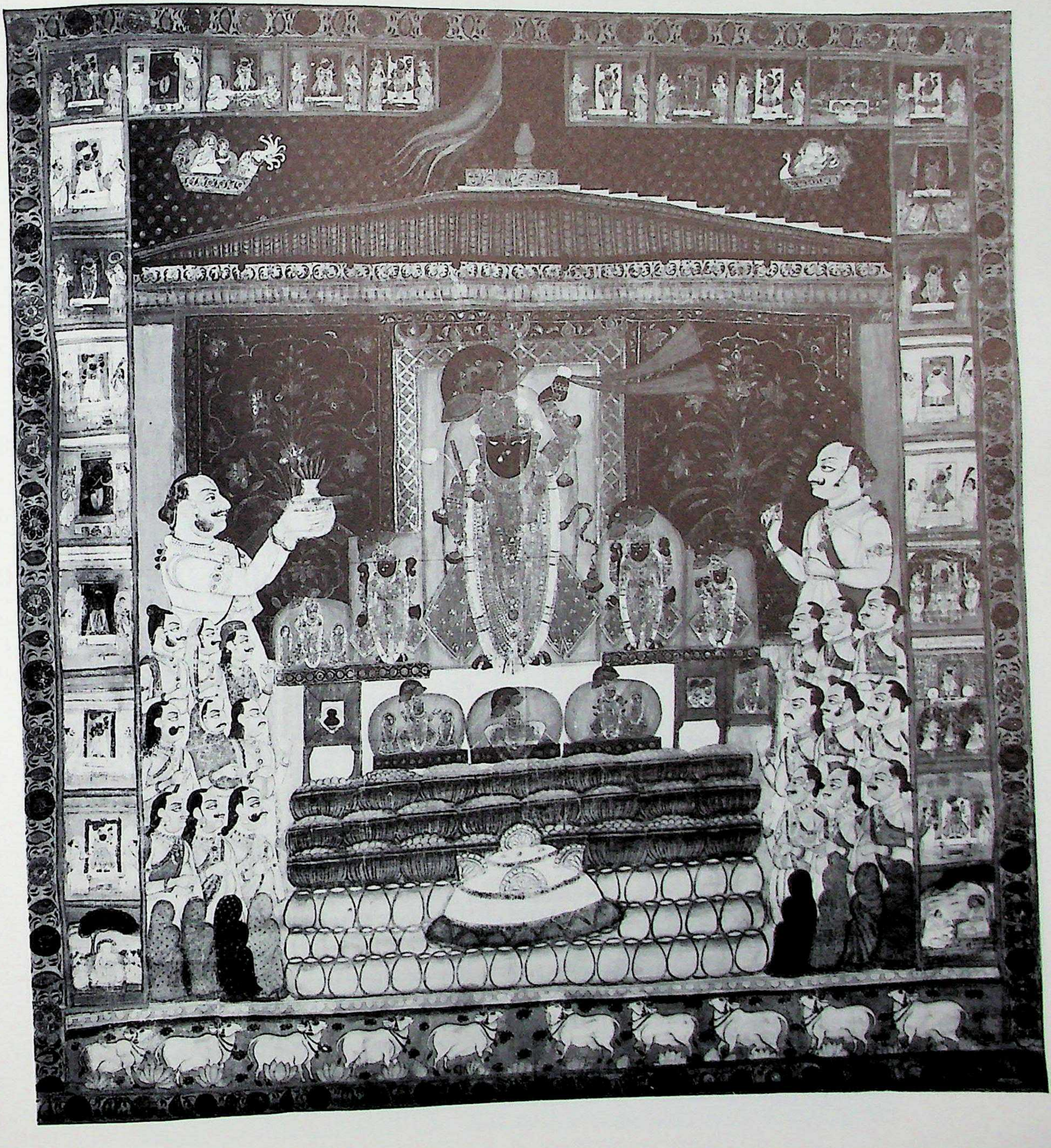
12. ANNAKUṬ (the mountain of food)

The same subject as catalog number 11 but with certain discrepancies. The images include a small figure of Balarāma accompanying Navanītapriyā-jī at the bottom right of the shrine. The cows are not accompanied by *gopas*. The deities in the sky are Indra and his consort (left) and Brahmā and his consort (right).

Twenty-six smaller panels surround the scene. These show (1) Śrī Viṭṭhalnāth-jī (2-25) twenty-four festivals in sequence commencing with Vallabhāchārya's birthday (26) Śrī Vallabhāchārya-jī.

Size: 88 x 88

Nāthadwāra, c. 1870-80



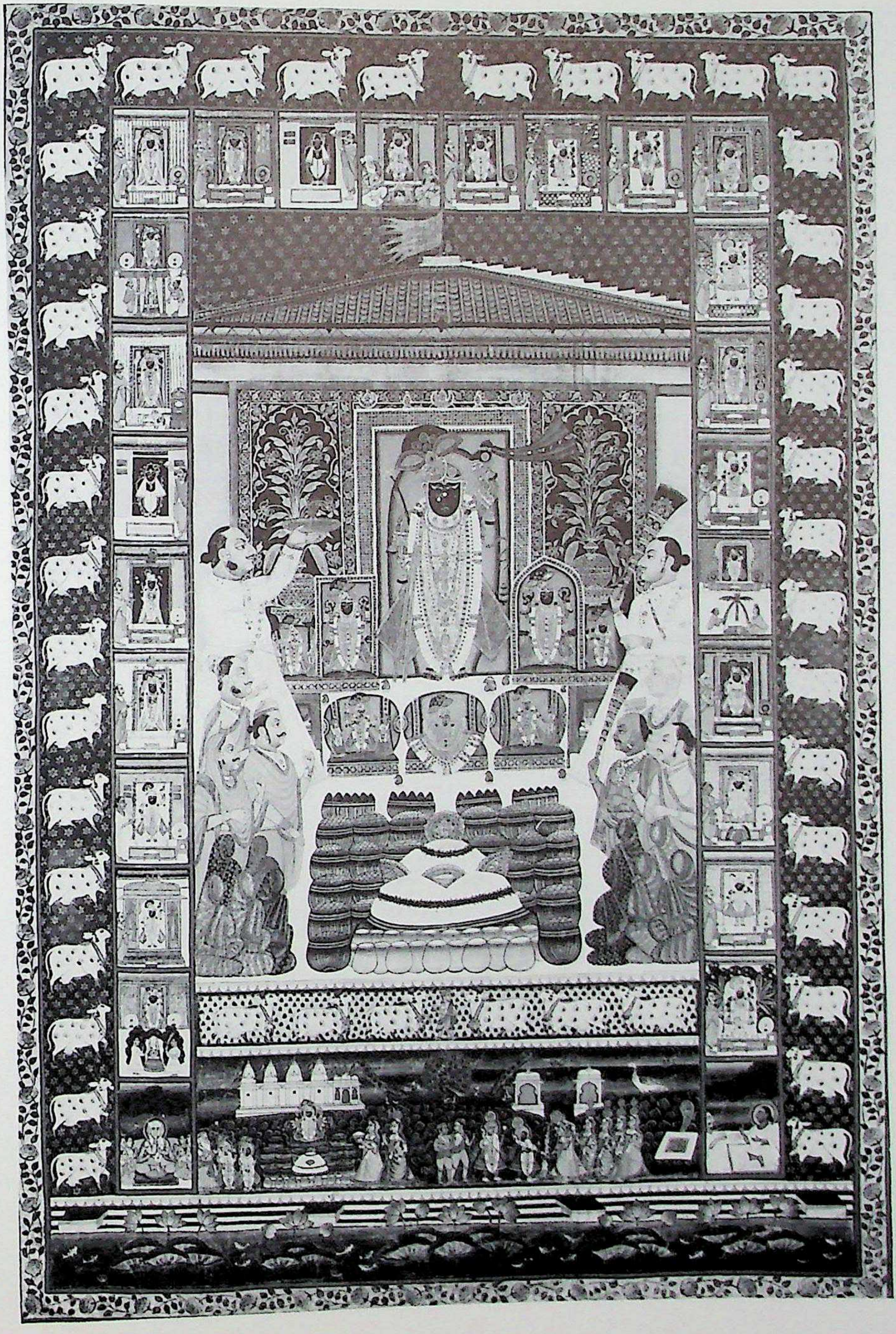
13. ANNAKUṬ (the mountain of food)

The central panel contains the same principal elements as catalog number 11 but no gods are shown in the sky and the number of devotees is less. At the bottom near the *Jumnā Ghāt* is shown a ten-armed figure of Kṛishṇa impersonating the Mountain God standing before a temple with food set out for the *Govardhan pūjā* watched by Nanda, Balarāma, Kṛishṇa, Yaśoda and a *gopī*. To the right of this, Kṛishṇa is shown with his *gopa* companions exacting toll from milkmaids carrying milk or curds to Mathurā. To the extreme right is a sacred tank (*kuṇd*), evidently the Mānasi Gangā.

Twenty-six small panels surround the main one. These show (1) Śrī Viṭṭhalnāth-jī (2-25) twenty-four festivals in sequence, commencing with *Phūl Ḍol* (26) Śrī Vallabhāchārya-jī. Surrounding these panels is a blue frieze containing cows marked with auspicious handprints.

Size: 68 x 47

Nāthadwāra, 20th century



14. ANNAKUṬ (the mountain of food) with genealogical tree

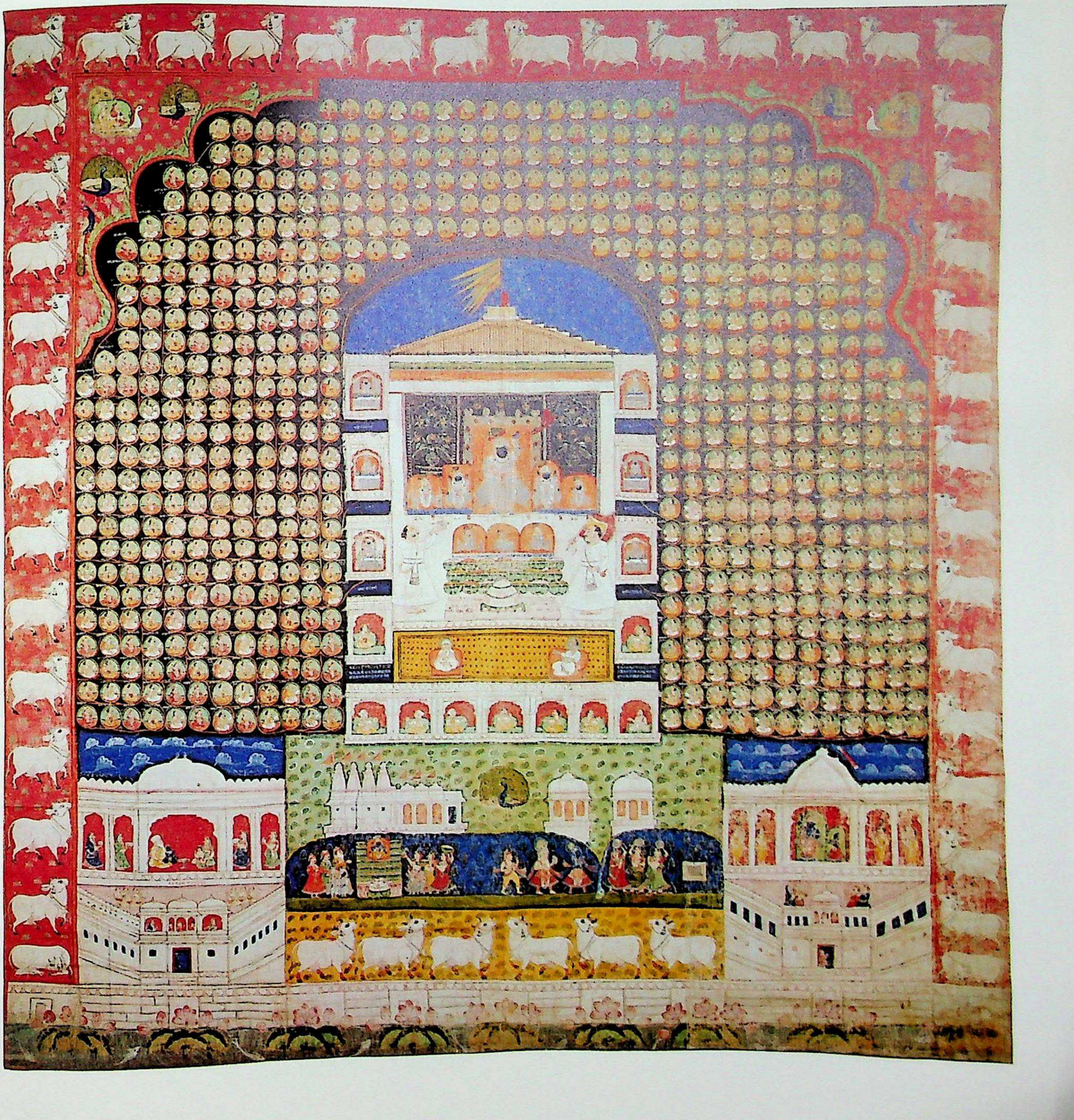
The central panel depicts the Nāthadwāra temple with the images set out as in catalog number 11 with the food before them in the courtyard. Two priests stand, one on each side, with Viṭṭhalnāth and Vallabhāchārya seated in the foreground. Around the courtyard are fifteen subordinate shrines of which the top three on either side are occupied by the six other forms of Kṛishṇa (see Appendix 1) i.e. Mathurānāth-jī, Viṭṭhalnāth-jī, Dwārkānāth-jī, Madanmohan-jī, Gokulchandramā-jī and Gokulnāth-jī. Below these are seated two distinguished teachers of the sect, Śrī Purushottam-jī (left) and Śrī Gopīnāth-jī (right). The seven shrines at the bottom contain seated members of the Vallabhāchārya family.

Below these is shown Mount Govardhan with the cowherd families celebrating *Govardhan pūjā*. To the right of this is the *Dāna Līlā*. A row of cows appears below within a wall joining two buildings at the edge of the river Jumnā. The building on the left is Nanda's house in which Kṛishṇa and Balarāma are being fed. That on the right is a shrine in which the image of Balarāma is being worshipped.

Above these buildings and surrounding the central panel is a genealogical tree composed of 684 medallions containing inscribed portraits of Vallabhāchārya's descendants interconnected by red lines which emanate from the images which Viṭṭhalnāth Goswāmī divided among his seven sons. The whole is framed by a red cusped arch border by a row of cows, the spandrels containing peacocks and divinities in celestial chariots. Inscriptions on the *pichhavāī* refer to it as *Śrī Vallabha kula kalpadruma* – 'The celestial tree of the Vallabha family'.

Size: 100 x 96

Nāthadwāra, c. 3rd quarter of the 19th century



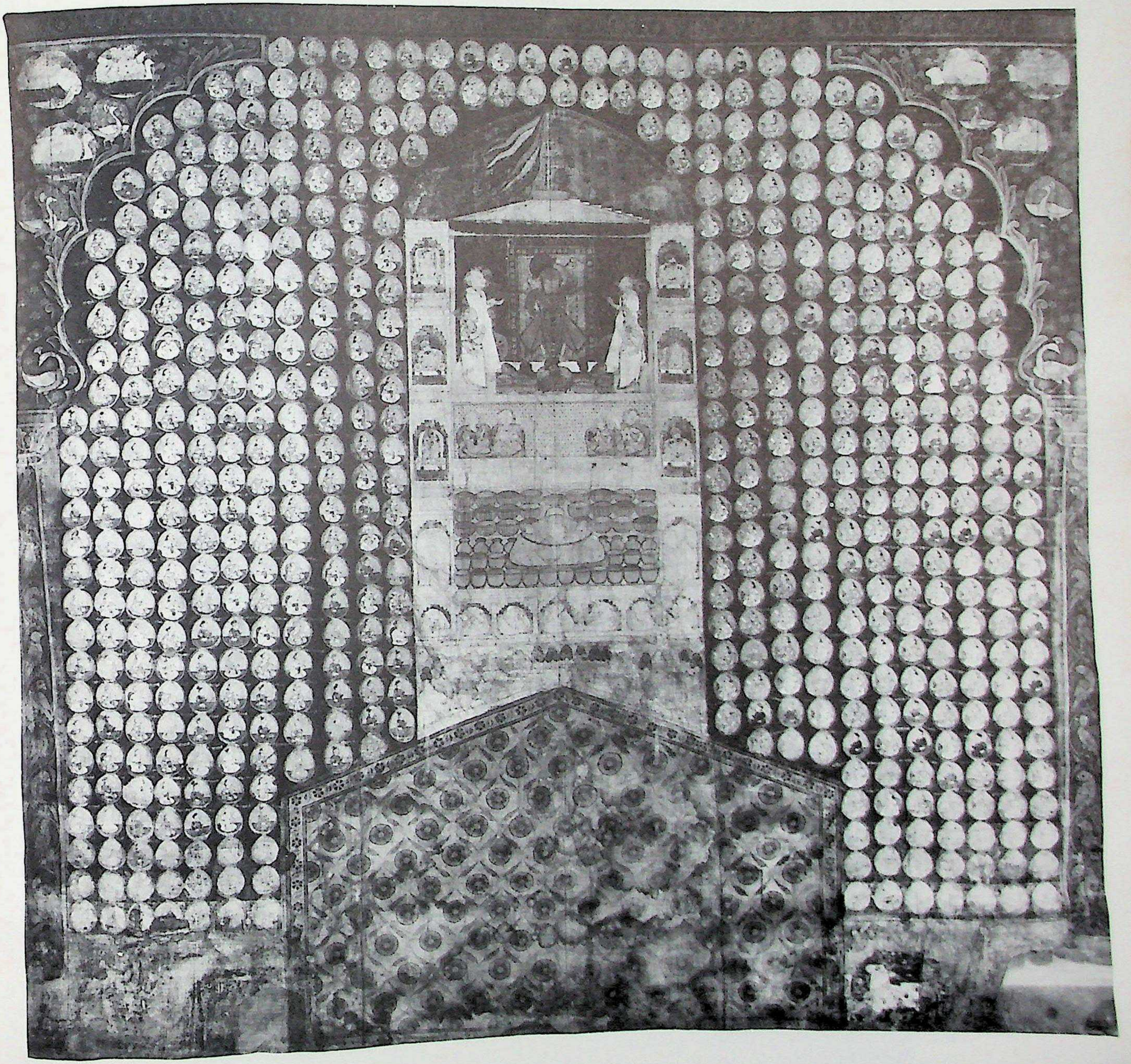
15. ANNAKUṬ (the mountain of food) with genealogical tree

The central panel depicts the Nāthadwāra temple but, unlike catalog numbers 11-14, only the images of Śrī Nāth-jī and Navanītapriyā-jī are present in the main shrine. Four priests attend the images and seated in front of the images are Śrī Vallabhāchārya, Śrī Viṭṭhalnāth, Śrī Purushottam and Śrī Gopīnāth. Below these figures the courtyard is empty apart from the food prepared for the ceremony. Fifteen subordinate shrines surround the courtyard as in catalog number 14 and the upper ones containing the six dispersed images of Kṛishṇa are joined to the 544 medallions containing portraits of Vallabha's descendants. Below the central temple is a landscape with trees and shrines with the top of a cloth *siṁhāsana* painted below.

The whole is framed by a cusped arch with parakeets decorating its columns and the spandrels decorated with peacocks and divinities in their celestial chariots.

Size: 78 x 82

Nāthadwāra, mid-19th century



16. GOPĀSHṬAMĪ (the festival of cattle)

Śrī Nāth-jī stands before a white *pichhavāī* in a small shrine before a larger *pichhavāī* depicting plantain, mango and palm trees. He wears a red and orange skirt (*kachhnī*) and *pāījāma, dopaṭṭa,* jewelry, etc. The plinth of the shrine incorporates small niches for Navanītapriyā-jī and a *śālagrāma.*

A small figure of Madanmohan-jī stands on the plinth together with a covered pot of Jumnā water, *pān* box and two folded *pān* leaves. Two priests attend the image, one performing *āratī* with a lamp, the other holding a *morchhal.* Above in the sky the gods Brahmā and Śiva rain flowers upon the roof of the Nāthadwāra shrine from which hangs a ceiling canopy.

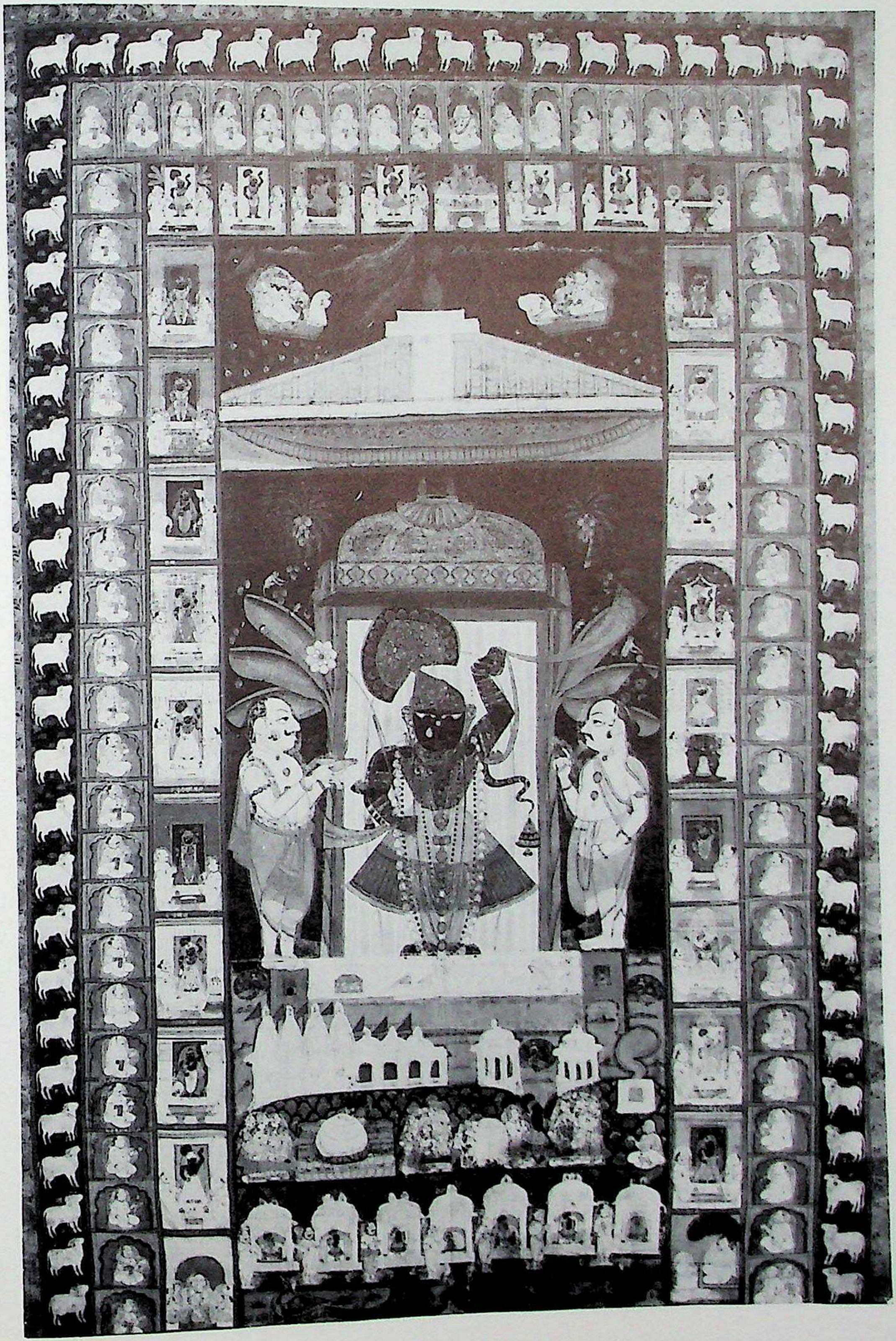
Below the image is shown Mount Govardhan where the *Govardhan pūjā* takes place on the left and *Dāna Līlā* at the right near the Mānasi Gangā, below which sits Vallabhāchārya. Below this again is a row of shrines, each containing one of the seven forms of Kṛishṇa attended by a priest.

Around the center are twenty-eight small panels. These show (1) Śrī Gosāīṅ-jī with disciples followed by the usual twenty-four illustrations of the image during the seasonal festivals commencing with *Akhya Tīj* but with two additional panels representing the *Bhāī Bīj* (16) and *Banjātra Parva* (24). The last panel (28) shows Vallabhāchārya-jī and a disciple. The sequence of festivals is correct except that (27) *Narasiṁha Chaturdaśi* should follow (2).

Surrounding these festival scenes is a row of 63 niches in which are named portraits of Vallabhāchārī priests. It is not clear whether these represent nine generations of the incumbents of the seven chief shrines of the sect or whether other niches have been lost with the removal of the bottom of the *pichhavāī.* The identification of this as a *Gopāshṭamī pichhavāī* rests upon the row of cows against a black background which surrounds the whole. The costume of the idol and white backcloth would be equally appropriate to the *Dāna Līlā* and *Śarat Pūrṇamā* festivals but no *gopīs* are shown and the latter is conclusively ruled out by the absence of stars in the sky or on the cloth at the foot of the throne.

Size: 80 x 55

Nāthadwāra, mid-19th century



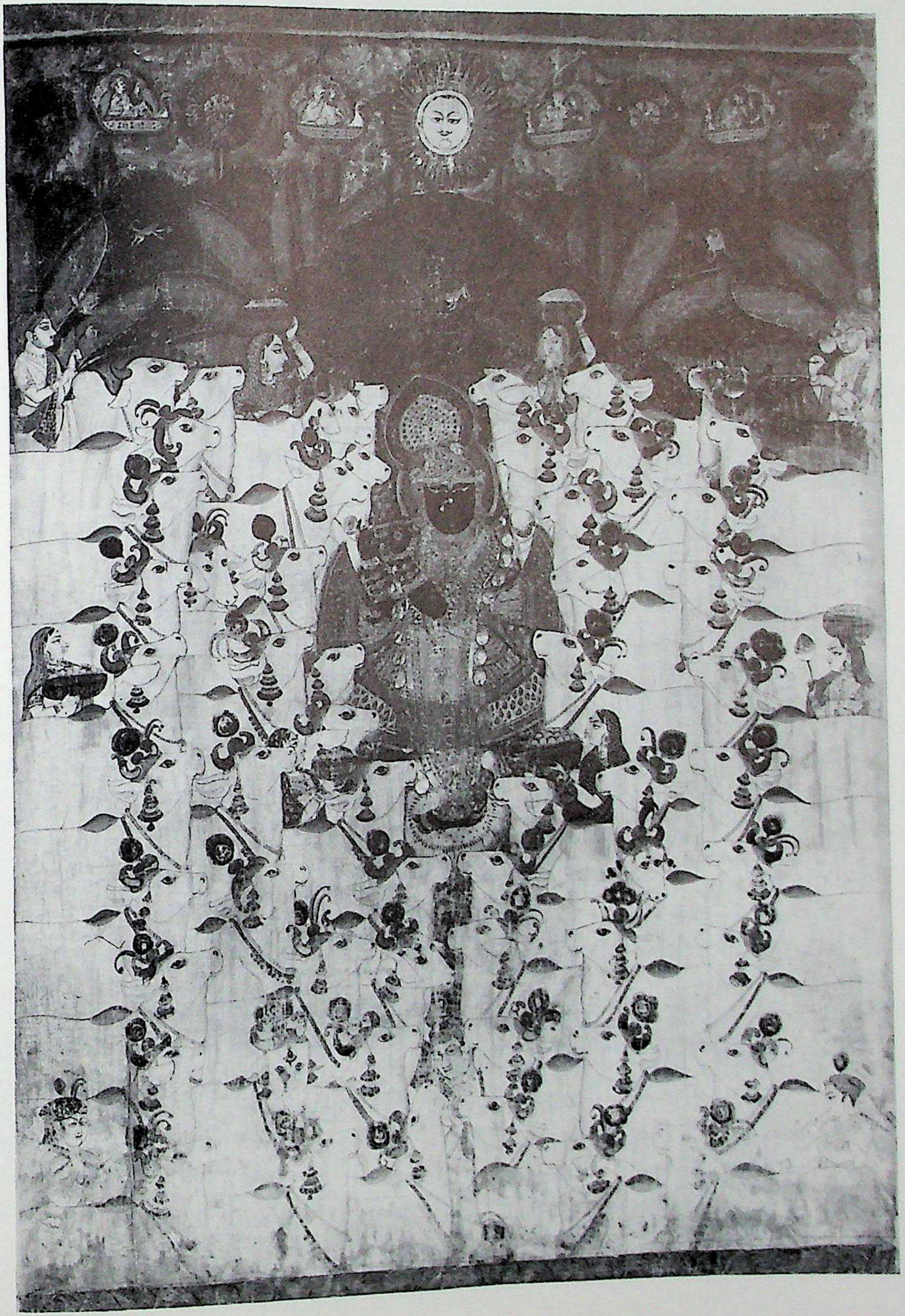
17. GOPĀSHṬAMĪ (the festival of cattle)

Kṛishṇa playing the flute (probably Gokulchandramā-jī) stands on a lotus pedestal surrounded by cattle who are decorated with peacock plumes for the festival. Among the herd are *gopas* and *gopīs*, who bear offerings in baskets. In the sky above the background of trees is the sun with two celestial chariots on each side containing divine couples.

As in the case of Śrī Nāth-jī's costume during this festival, the image wears *a kachhnī, pāījamā, dopaṭṭa* and turban but instead of red, the color is orange, with gold and silver brocaded borders on the garments.

Size: 65 x 46

Nāthadwāra, late 19th century



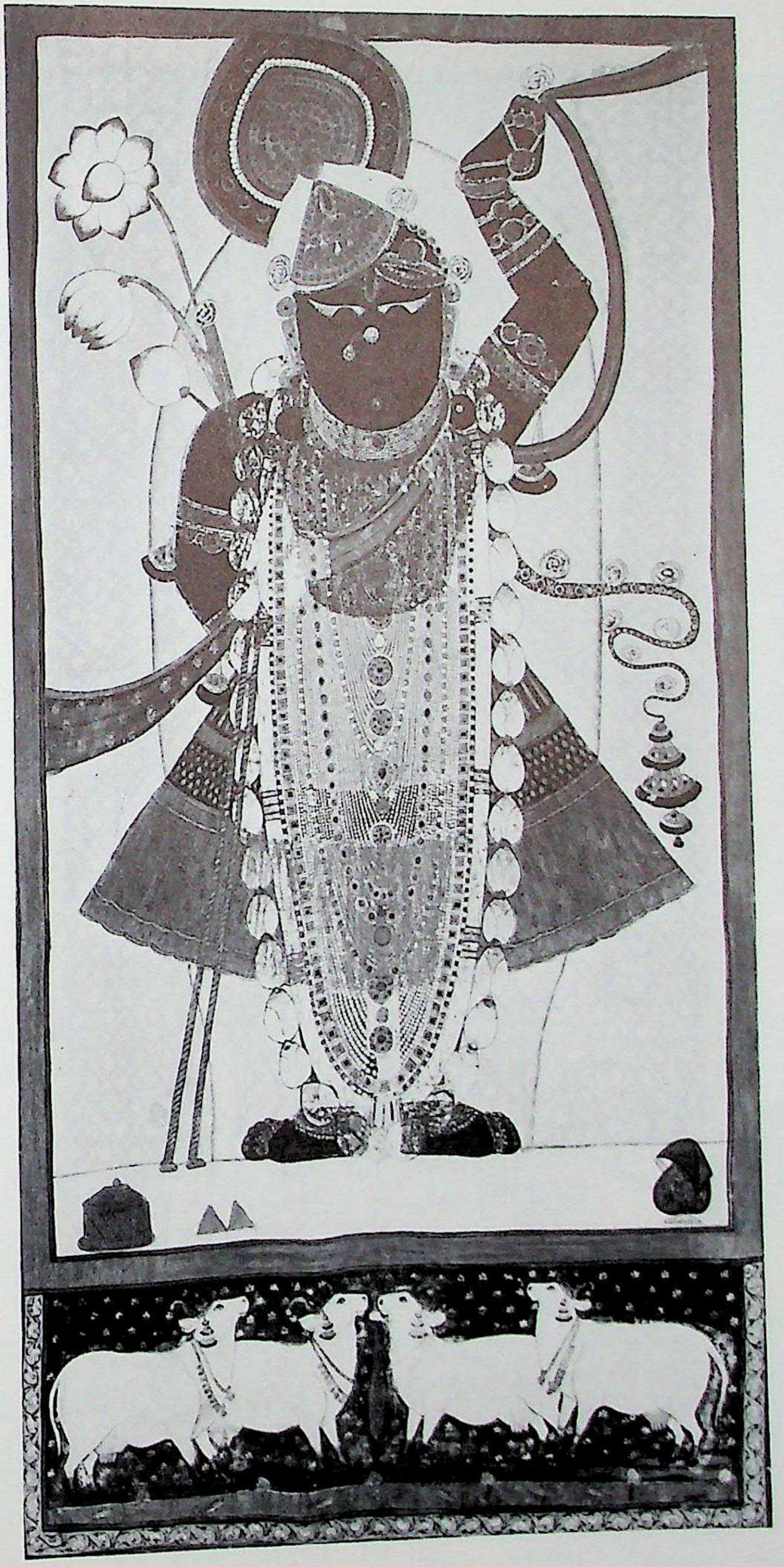
18. GOPĀSHṬAMĪ (the festival of cattle)

Śrī Nāth-jī wearing a silver-brocaded orange *kachhnī* with *pāījamā*, *dopaṭṭa* and turban, ornaments and garlands, stands before a decorated white *pichhavāī* bordered with silver. He holds his cowherds' stick (*lakuṭ*) and his hair is shown carefully dressed in a pigtail with flowers by Rādhā. At his feet are the *pāndān*, two folded betel leaves and the covered pot of Jumnā water.

Below as though on a separate cloth *siṁhāsana* with a floral border are four cows shown against a star or flower-spangled blue background at the Jumnā's edge. The use of stars on a blue ground at the foot of the throne raises the possibility that this hanging represents *Śarat Purṇamā*, when the clothes and white background are similar to those used for *Gopāshṭamī*.

Size: 70 x 36

Nāthadwāra, 20th century



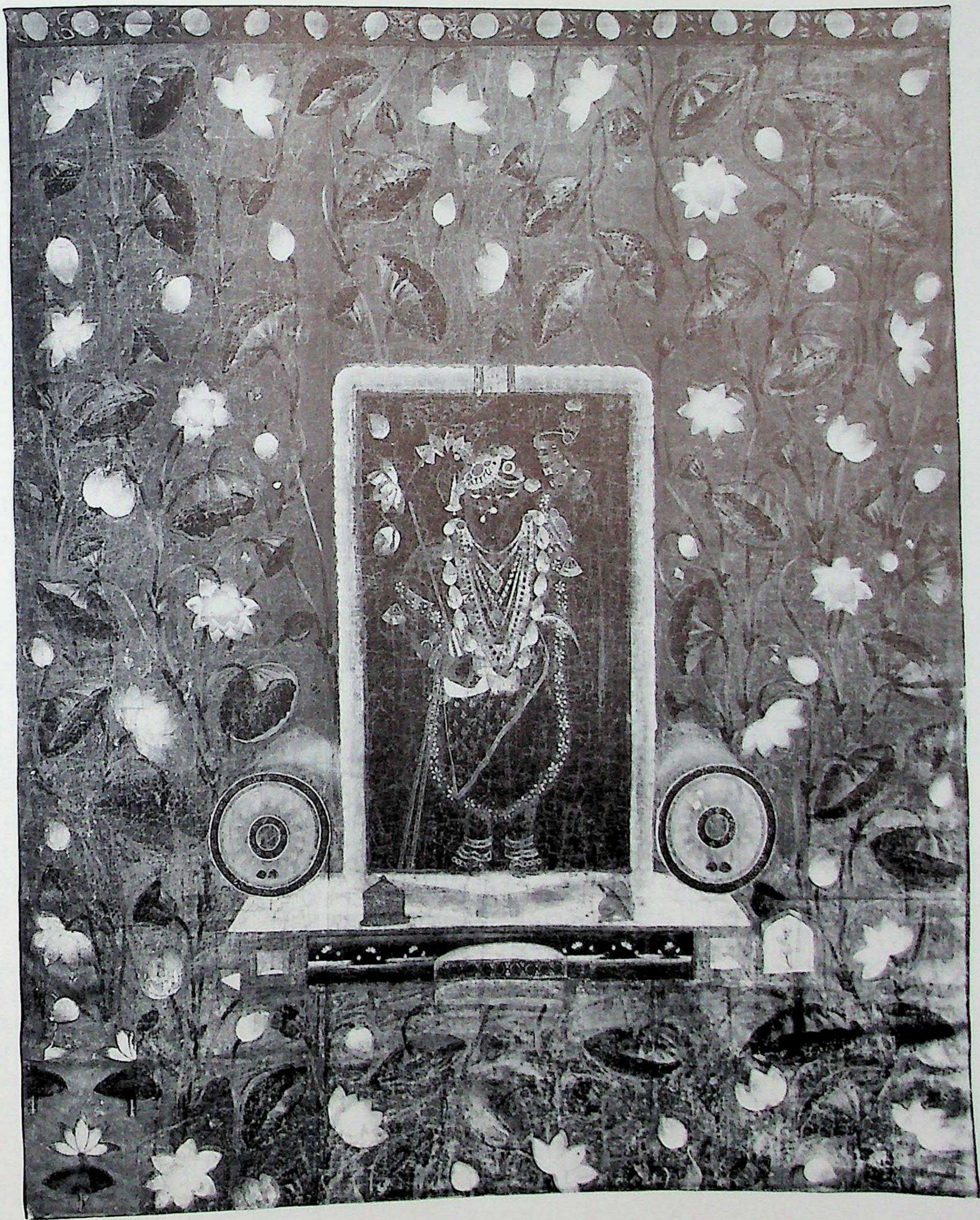
19. JAL VIHĀR (water sports)

The image of Śrī Nāth-jī dressed for his bath in a half *dhoṭī* (ād) together with ornaments and flower garlands is shown without a *pichhavāī* obscuring the surrounding portion of the stele, which is decorated around the edges with lotus petals. The throne pedestal has cushions on either side and supports the *pāndān* and water vessel. At each end are miniature shrines containing the *śālagrāma*, Navanītapriyā-jī and Madanamohan-jī.

A *siṁhāsana* draped over the front of the throne shows the Jumnā bank and a *chaukī* stands in front of this. These features of the Nāthadwāra shrine are shown as though placed in the river Jumnā with swaying lotuses growing all around. Bees fly among the blossoms and egrets stand at the bottom.

Size: 107 x 86

Nāthadwāra, 20th century

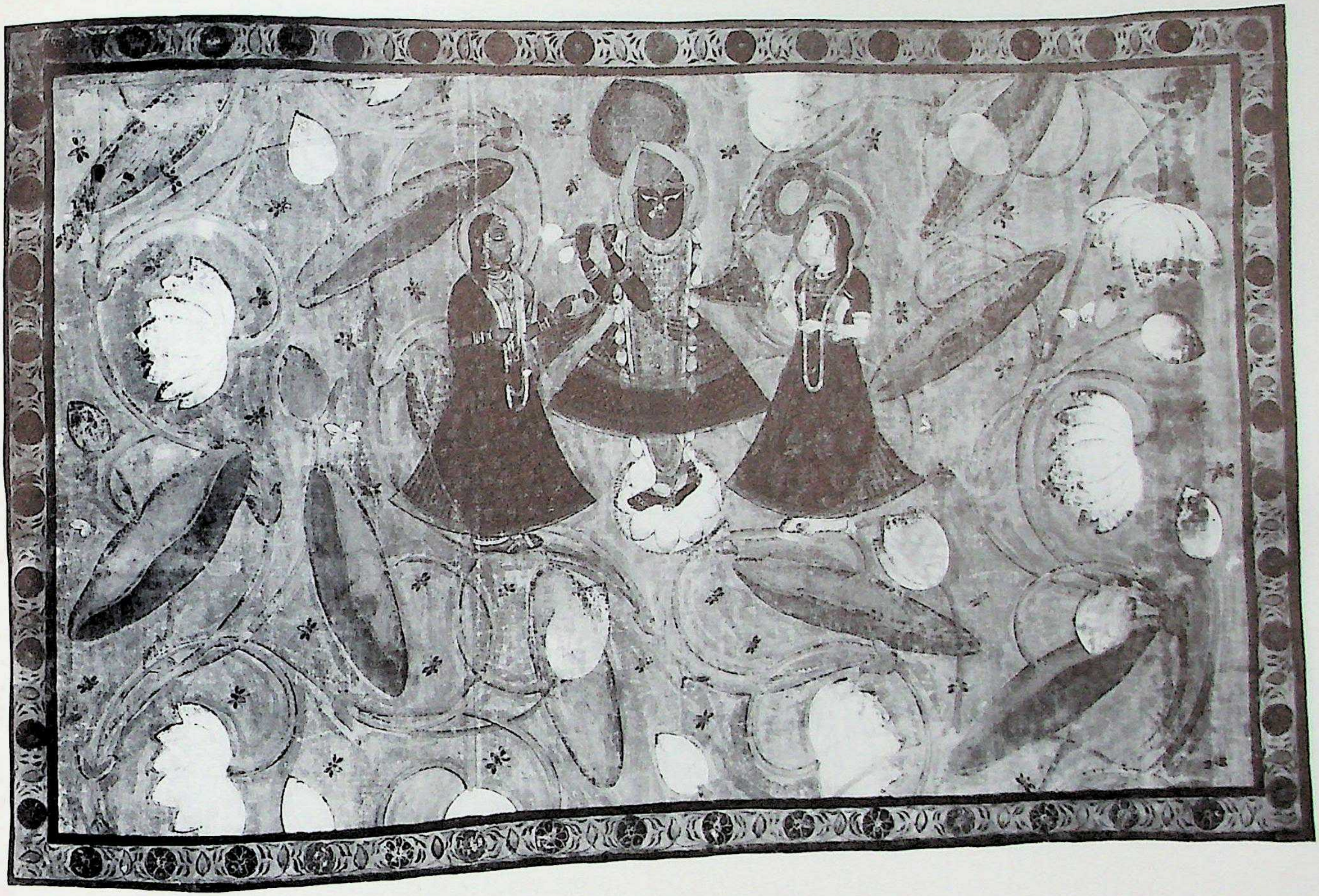


20. JAL VIHĀR (water sports)

Madanmohan-jī, the proxy of Śrī Nāth-jī, stands on a lotus flower in the river Jumnā flanked by two *gopīs*. The girl to his proper right is blue-complexioned and holds lotus buds. The other holds a fan. Madanmohan-jī is dressed in a red *kachhnī*, etc. instead of the *dhoṭī* and half *dhoṭī*, which one would expect for this festival. The water surrounding the figures is filled with curling stems bearing lotus flowers among which bees are flitting. Originally this *pichhavāī* was larger and has been cut down and a fresh border painted at top and bottom over the original pigments.

Size: 33 x 53

Nāthadwāra, 20th century



21. DASĪ GHAR MILAN (meeting in a servant girl's house)

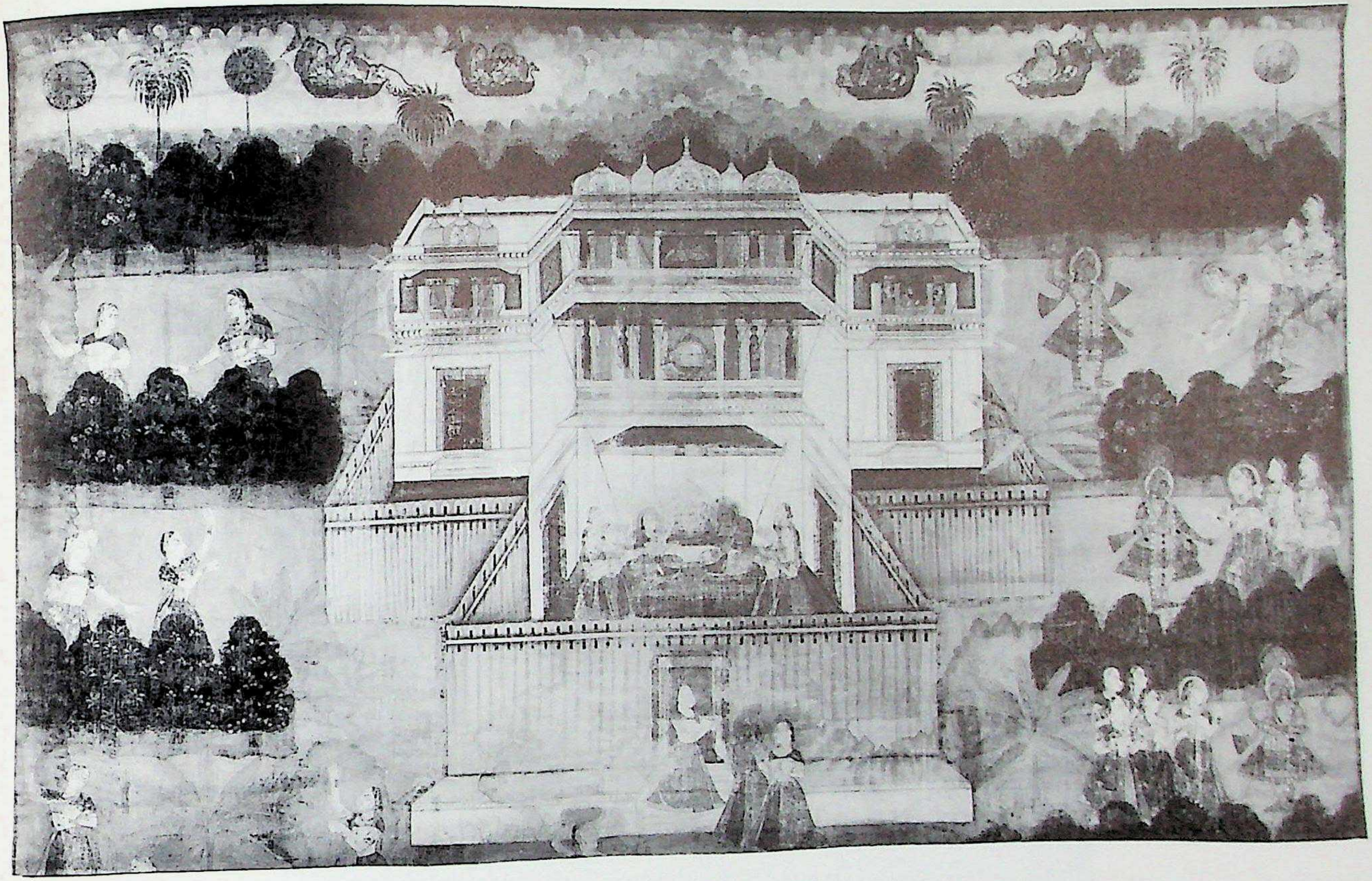
The hanging illustrates a poem from the *Rasikapriyā* of the poet Keśav Dās, in which Kṛishṇa disguises himself as a girl in order to play hide and seek with the milkmaids at night. After flirting with Rādhā in the forest he uses his disguise in order to enter the courtyard of a servant's house, where the pair can make love without detection by the villagers.

In the top right hand corner of a wooded landscape Kṛishṇa meets Rādhā and her companions and is shown twice below in conversation with them before he embraces Rādhā and; finally disguised, he sits with her in a bower attended by her companions (not shown)°. To the left of the picture *gopīs* are playing in the forest and picking flowers which they bring in baskets to the house – by no means a humble dwelling – in the center of the hanging. As they approach, the disguised Kṛishṇa is escorted within and sits with Rādhā on a *chaukī* in the courtyard. Later they retire to play *chaupar* in a first floor room and finally in an upper chamber they discover a convenient bed. The time of day is indicated by monsoon clouds lit up by the setting sun. Above in aerial chariots are the gods Indra, Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva with their consorts.

Size: 58 x 97

Nāthadwāra, late 19th century

° Due to the fragile condition of this *pichhavāī* the lower portion has been folded under.



22. SIṀHĀSANA ('lion-seat', i.e., throne)

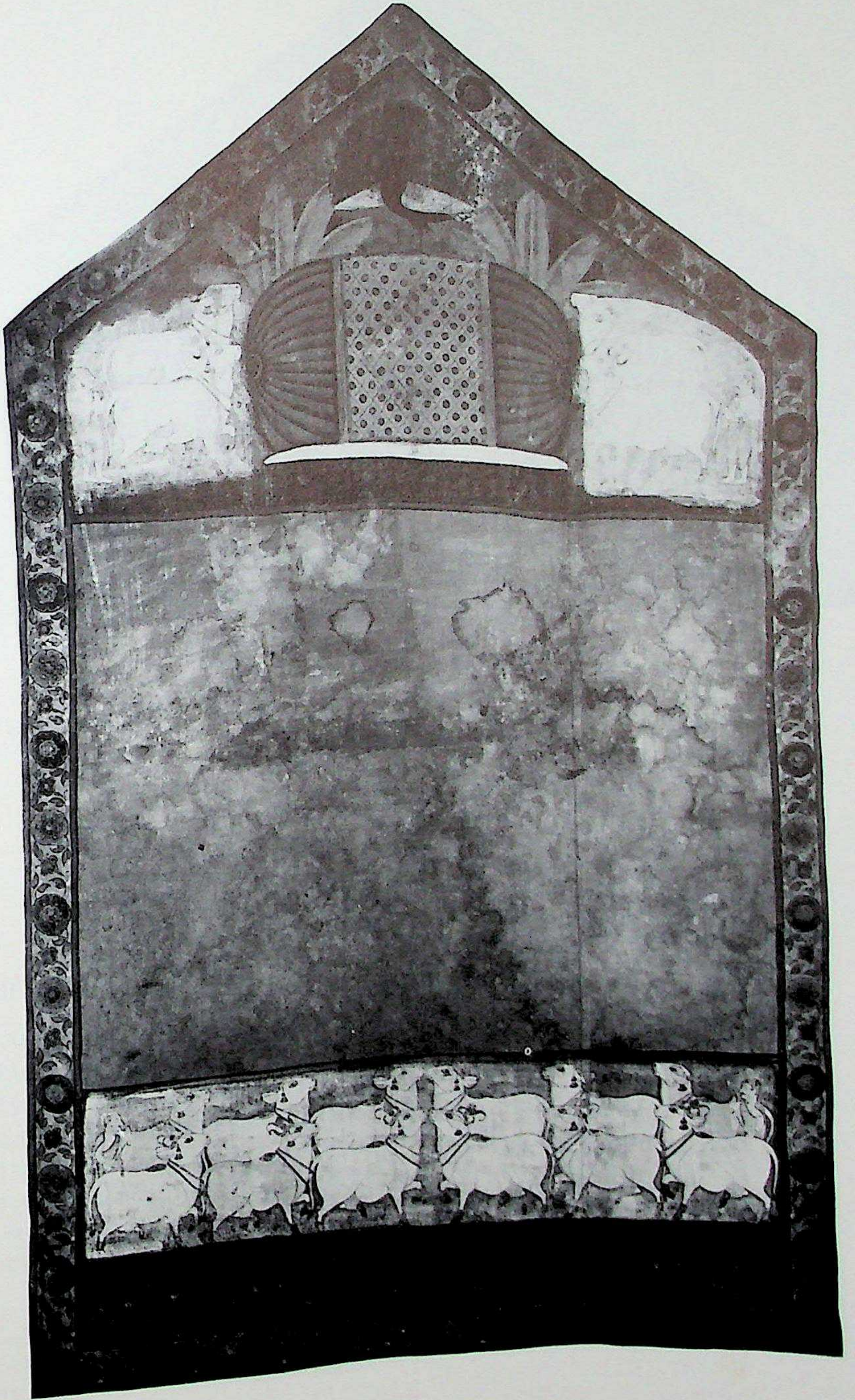
The cotton cover for the throne on which the image stands is shaped at the top in the form of a triangular pediment in which the seat is depicted with a cushion behind it and a background of trees in which plantains are prominent. A peacock, metaphorical of Kṛishṇa, is perched in the center and cattle with *gopas* stand in adoration on either side.

The central panel of the *siṁhāsana,* which rests flat on the throne, is left plain – painted with a terracotta shade which has become stained with liquids used during worship. The lower portion which drapes in front of the throne is decorated with two ranks of adoring cattle facing inwards along the bank of the Jumnā with a *gopa* at each end.

This *siṁhāsana,* would possibly have been used for the *Gopāshṭamī* festival.

Size: 74 x 46

Nāthadwāra, late 19th century

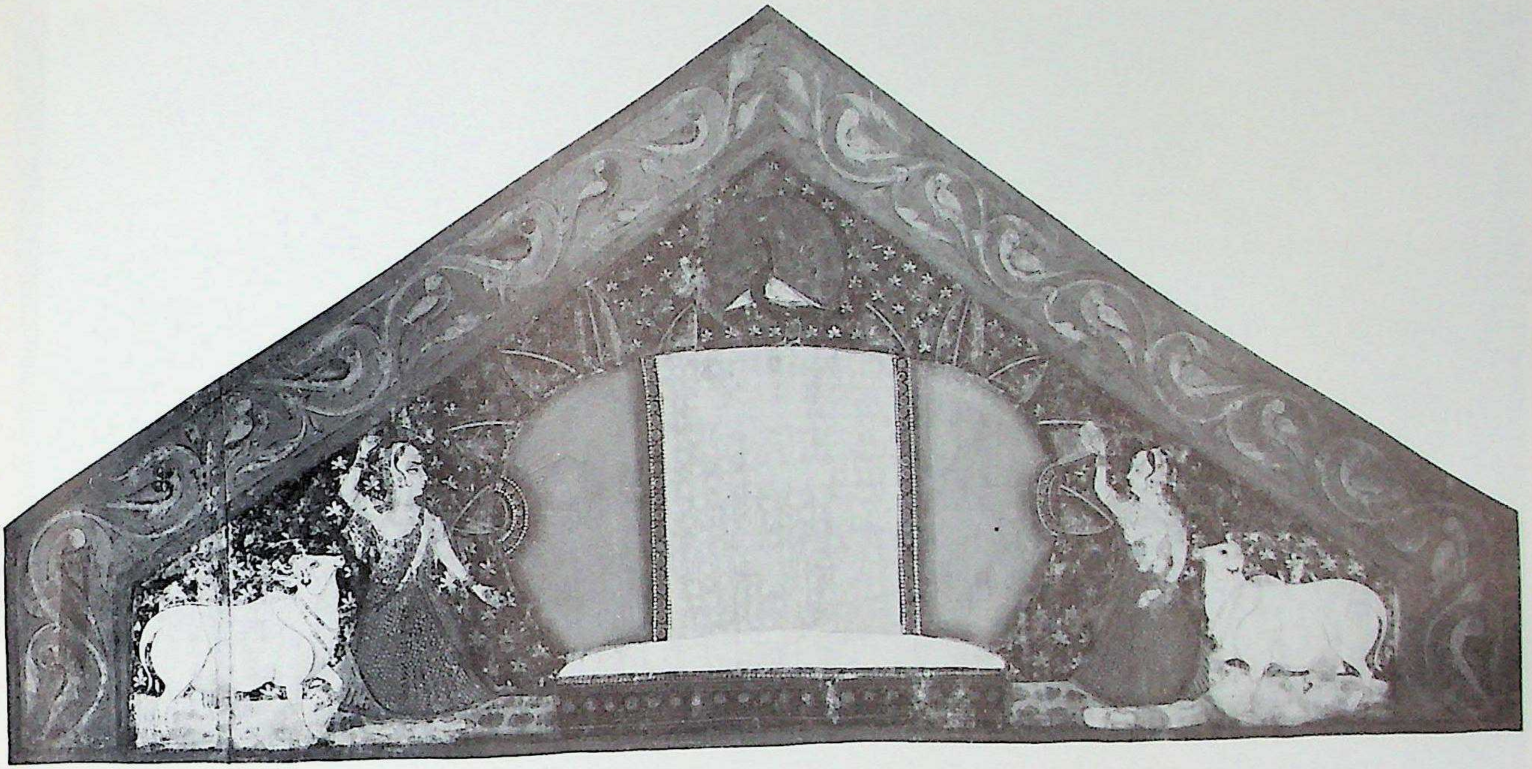


23. SIṀHĀSANA ('lion-seat', i.e., throne)

This is the top or rear portion of a throne cover showing a large cushion (*takya*) behind the seat with a peacock perched on top. On either side stands a *gopī* with right arm raised and a cow behind her facing the throne. The background is a clear starlit sky and plantain leaves. This *siṁhāsana* appears to have been made for use in the *Śarat Purṇamā* festival. There is a decorative border of parakeets in scrolling foliage instead of the usual floral scroll.

Size: 18 x 40

Nāthadwāra, late 19th century



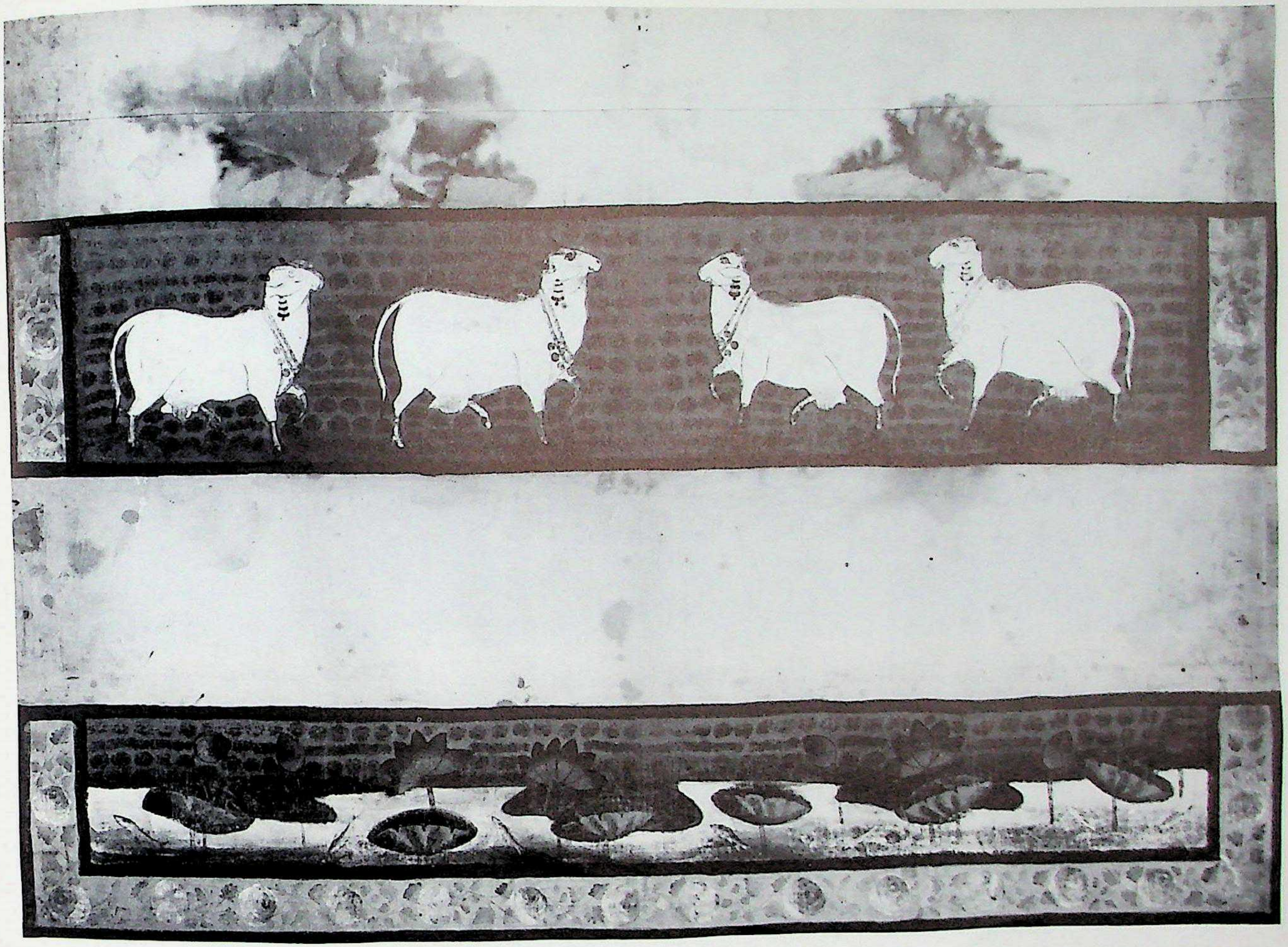
24. SĪṚHĪ (steps)*

A cloth cover for the steps leading to the *siṁhāsana* or throne decorated with two panels which hang over the risers, each with a plain portion above to rest on the steps. The upper panel is a long rectangle containing four inward facing cows in a pasture, with floral borders only at the two ends. The lower panel shows the Jumnā bank with lotuses growing and has a floral border at the bottom as well as the sides.

Size: 36 x 51

Nāthadwāra, 20th century

* sometimes rendered in its Gujarāti form (*sīḍī*)



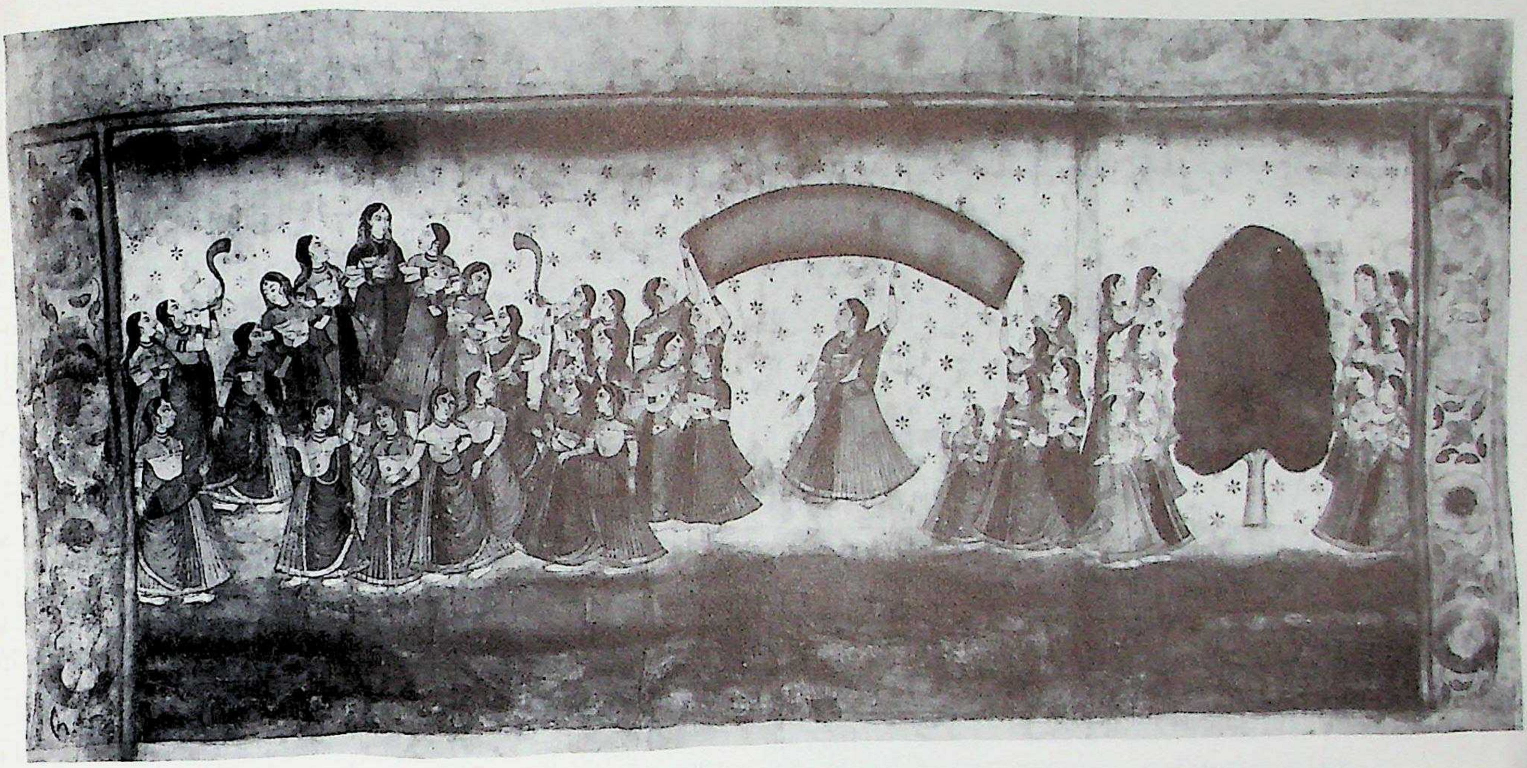
25. SĪṚHĪ (steps)

A single panel for a step-riser depicting the *gopīs* re-enacting incidents from Kṛishṇa's life among them (see also catalog number 5). At the left they are performing the *Rāsa Maṇḍala* or circular dance. In the center they hold up a *sāṛī*, while one imitates Kṛishṇa's raising of Mount Govardhan. On the right they worship the *kadamba* tree in which Kṛishṇa hid with their clothing while they bathed in the Jumnā.

This *sīṛhī* was probably used in conjunction with a *pichhavāī* depicting the *Rāsa Līlā*.

Size: 22 x 47

Nāthadwāra, late 19th or early 20th century



THE PRINCIPAL IMAGES OF THE VALLABHA SAMPRADĀYA

1. Śrī Nāth-jī

Kṛishṇa in the form of Govardhannāth 'lord of Mount Govardhan'. The image is of black stone and shows Kṛishṇa standing with his left hand raised to hold up the mountain in order to protect his friends from Indra's rain clouds. His right hand is held at waist level. The surrounding portion of the stele shows the mountain itself with various creatures dwelling in caves around the larger cavern in which Śrī Nāth-jī appears. Starting from the bottom left, these are two cows near a conch shell, a snake, a ram, a seated ascetic (top left), a bird, a pair of ascetics (top right), a snake, a bear and two peacocks.

The account of the discovery of the image and installation by Vallabhāchārya in a shrine on Mount Govardhan has been given (p. 13). It is said to have been removed later to Gokul by Viṭṭhalnāth and remained there until 1669 A.D. when the Mughal Emperor Aurangzīb ordered the destruction of Hindu temples in the Mathurā region. In order to save the image, Goswāmī Dāmodar Lāl is said to have removed the image to Rājāsthān under the protection of Mahārāṇa Rāj Siṅgh of Mewāṛ. On reaching the village of Siṅhāṛ, twenty-four miles north of Udaipur, the cart carrying the image is said to have stuck in the mud and this was taken as an omen that the god wished to reside there. The installation took place in March 1672. The place was afterwards renamed Nāthadwāra 'portal of the lord'.

Various opinions have been put forward about the antiquity of the image, which is said to have first manifested itself at Govardhan in 1310, when the left arm appeared from the ground. A. K. Coomaraswamy suggested that it might have been made under the Kushāṇ dynasty, i.e. early in the Christian era. It is very plausible that Vallabhāchārya may originally have found and installed an image of this date as Kushāṇ images of this type have been excavated in the Mathurā area. However, as Coomaraswamy has himself noticed, the surround of the present image clearly commemorates the story of Śrī Nāth-jī's appearance in a hole on the mountainside. Normally images of Govardhana-Kṛishṇa do not show this feature. It is significant, also, that it is not carved in the characteristic mottled red sandstone of the Mathurā area but is black. A black stone was quarried in South West Rājāsthān and used for many sculptures found around the area where the image is now located. So far as one can judge, the stylistic characteristics of the image are those of the 16th, or, more probably, of the 17th century (cf., for example, J. E. van Lohuizen-de Leeuw, *Indian Sculptures in the von der Heydt* Collection, Zürich, 1961, pp. 146-151, showing an image which is also in the greenish-black stone of this region).

2. Śrī Mathurānāth-jī or Mathureś-jī
'the lord of Mathurā'

This is a four-armed standing image of Vishṇu, which appears to be carved in the same sort of black stone as Śrī Nāth-jī. Images of this type normally carry a discus and mace in the upper left and right hands and a conch and lotus flower in the left and right lower hands.

According to Col. James Tod, the image was once at Khamnor, a village ten miles south of Nāthadwāra. By the early 19th century it was at Koṭāh. Subsequently a dispute between the Goswāmī and the Mahārājā of Koṭāh led to the transfer of the image to the village of Jatipura on the south west side of Mount Govardhan.

3. Śrī Viṭṭhalnāth-jī

Viṭṭhalnāth is another name for Viṭhobā, a form of Vishṇu worshipped at Paṇḍharpūr in Mahārāshtra by a sect of *bhaktas* known as *Vārkarīs*. Vallabhāchārya is said to have visited Paṇḍharpūr during his second pilgrimage and here received the divine command to marry. It is possible that he might have been influenced by the *Vārkarī* cult in the formation of his own beliefs. The image is represented as golden in color and is in the characteristic posture of the Mahārāshtrian images, with the two hands resting on the hips. As in the case of the image at Paṇḍharpūr, Viṭṭhalnāth is shown attended by his wife, Rukmiṇī. It is traditionally thought that the image was found in the Ganges at Benāres in 1516. In the early 19th century it was at Koṭāh but in 1865 Karsandas Mulji reported it as being in Kanauj. It now occupies a temple in Nāthadwāra.

4. Śrī Dwārkānāth-jī or Dwārkādhiś-jī 'lord of Dwārkā'

This is a four-armed image of Vishṇu resembling Śrī Mathureś-jī and also apparently carved from a black stone. The image is housed in a large and important *havelī* on the edge of the Rāj Samudra lake at Kāṅkrolī, eleven miles to the north of Nāthadwāra. It is said to have been presented by Viṭṭhalnāth to his third son, Bālakṛishṇa, and removed from Mathurā in 1669. It was moved to its present site from the nearby village of Asotiya when the Rāj Samudra received its inauguration in 1676.

5. Śrī Gokulnāth-jī 'lord of Gokul'

Kṛishṇa is shown playing the flute but with four arms, the upper right holding a ball of butter. The image is depicted as golden in color and is attended by a female figure on either side. The image is housed at Gokul in a temple which Growse ascribes to the year 1511.

6. Gokulchandramā-jī 'the moon of Gokul'

Kṛishṇa, shown as a dark-colored two-armed flautist, is without attendants. The image was said to have been found in a ravine on the bank of the Jumnā and later transferred to Jaipur, from whence it was expelled by the Mahārājā during the second half of the 19th century. It is now at Kāmvan (Kāmban), a place associated with Kṛishṇa's boyhood, thirty-nine miles north west of Mathurā.

7. Śrī Madanmohan-jī 'he who intoxicates with desire'

The image resembles that of Gokulnāth-jī but has only two arms. It shared the same expulsion from Jaipur as Gokulchandramā-jī and is now enshrined at Kāmvan. The cult was also established at Jaipur in a garden pavilion of the city palace, where Kṛishṇa is worshipped as is Śrī Govind dev-jī (see figure 3).

Two other images, which are also sometimes included in lists of those distributed by Viṭṭhalnāth among his seven sons, are figures of the infant Kṛishṇa, crawling along with a ball of stolen butter in his right hand. These are Śrī Bālakṛishṇa-jī 'the child Kṛishṇa' at Sūrat and Śrī Navanītapriyā-jī 'the lover of fresh butter', whose shrine is in the *havelī* of Śrī Nāth-jī at Nāthadwāra. Navanītapriyā-jī is said to have been found in the Jumnā by Vallabhāchārya and is the household deity of the head priests of the sect at Nāthadwāra.

The image of Balarāma, Baladeva, or Dau-jī, at Baldeo, near Mathurā is also frequently represented in Nāthadwāra paintings (see catalog number 14) and is sometimes misidentified as Śrī Nāth-jī. Despite the fact that Balarāma was of light complexion, this image is black and has its right arm raised — instead of the left, as is the case with Śrī Nāth-jī. Balarāma is attended by his consort Revatī, and holds a cup of intoxicating liquor (*vāruṇī*) in his left hand. This refers to an incident which took place when Balarāma returned to Gokul after Kṛishṇa had gone to live in Dwārkā. After sporting with the *gopīs* and drinking *vāruṇī*, Balarāma rested by the river and commanded her to bathe him. When she refused, he took his plough and changed her course to the spot where he was resting.

Other images of all of the manifestations of Kṛishṇa described here occur in shrines elsewhere. There are also various other epithets of Kṛishṇa under which he is worshipped at *havelīs* in regions such as Gujarāt, where the sect has many adherents.

APPENDIX 2

THE SEASONAL FESTIVALS

In India as elsewhere the seasons of the year are marked by festivals which celebrate different phases of the agricultural cycle. These are supplemented by others founded on the movements of the planets or commemorating real or mythical events. Many of these festivals are celebrated all over India but others are confined to particular areas or sections of the population.

A large number of these pan-Indian festivals are celebrated by members of the Vallabha *sampradāya*, especially where they commemorate myths associated with the god Vishṇu. Other festivals such as the birthdays of Vallabha and his most prominent descendants are, of course, peculiar to the sect itself.

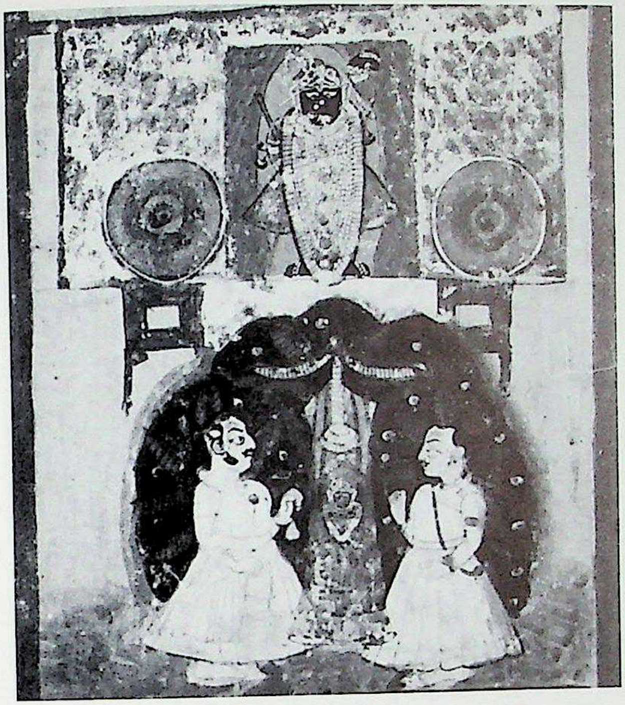
Within the sect there are twenty-four festivals of particular importance and, for the celebration of these, special modes have been devised for dressing the image and decorating his shrine. These twenty-four *śriṅgāras* or modes of decorating the image are often recorded in small panels which surround the central scene and they are generally placed in sequence according to the calendar.

Generally speaking, in North India the year starts in the middle of the month of Chaitra (March - April), but the New Year can also begin with three other months in areas where the Vallabha *sampradāya* is chiefly followed. Thus near Udaipur, where the sect has its chief shrine, the year starts at the beginning of the month Śrāvan (July - August) while in other parts of Rājāsthān and Gujarāt it begins with the middle of the preceding month of Āshāṛh. Elsewhere in Gujarāt, as in South India, it begins in the middle of Kārtik (October - November).

Despite these differences, the calendar followed by the sect at Nāthadwāra is not that of the immediate locality but is similar to that of Kṛishṇa's homeland, the Mathurā area, where the year starts in Chaitra. Thus the majority of *pichhavāīs* show the festival sequence beginning with *Phūl Ḍol* or *Rāma Navamī* (see catalog numbers 6, 7 and 13). Two others in the exhibition begin with festivals celebrated in the following month (see catalog numbers 12 and 16) and only one shows the seasonal events completely out of order (see catalog number 4).

According to the usual North Indian version of the calendar, each month begins on the day after the full moon and is divided into two fortnights of fifteen days. The first of these is called the 'dark half', when the moon is waning, followed by the 'bright half', when it waxes.

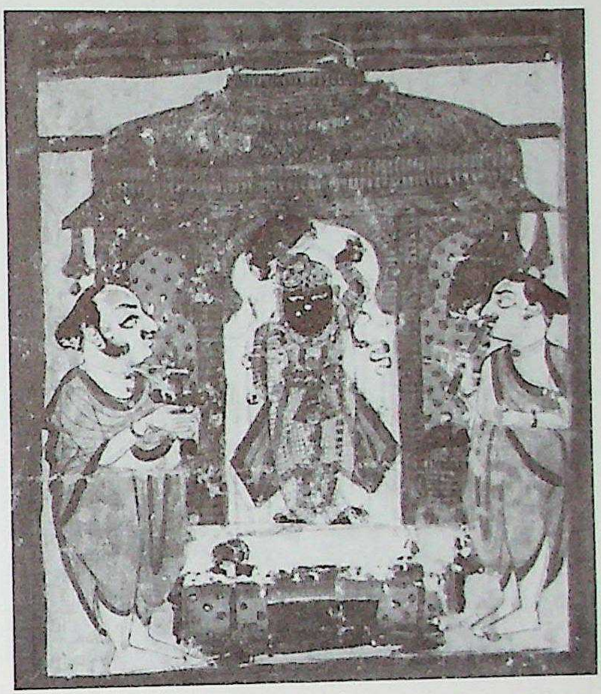
The following descriptions of the decoration of the image during the festivals listed below are based on observation of the paintings, which are not always consistent or carefully executed. Festivals 1-24 are from catalog number 6 illustrated in color, page 42.



1. *Phūl Ḍol*

This is a swinging ceremony associated with the festival of Holī, which culminates with the full moon of the month of Phālgun at the end of the year. If the months are calculated from the rise of the new moon, Phūl Ḍol occurs within the second half of Phālgun and Rāma Navamī becomes the first festival of the seasonal cycle. Otherwise Phūl Ḍol falls early in the dark half of Chaitra (March - April). At this time of year there are several swinging ceremonies. One of them, called Ḍol Jātrā, takes place on the day immediately after the full moon. Phūl Ḍol takes place a few days later, when the image of Navanītapriyā-jī is rocked in the flower-decked swing from which the festival takes its name.

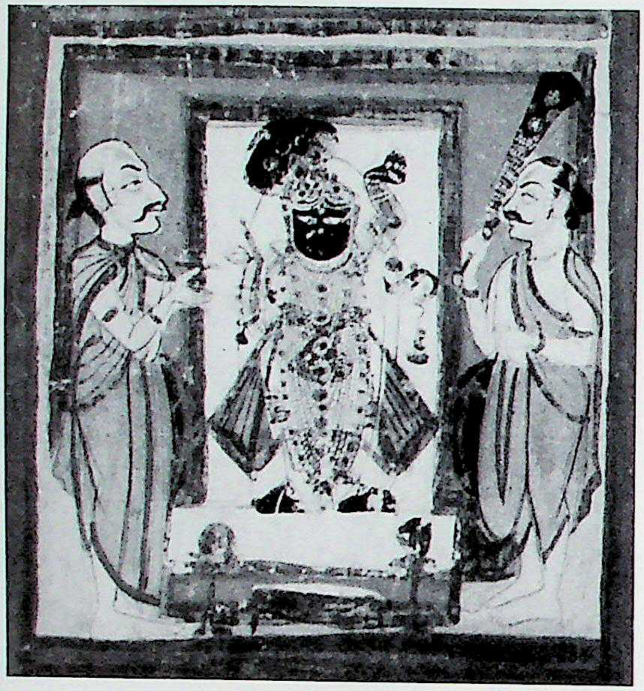
For this festival, Śrī Nāth-jī is dressed in a red *gheṛdār jāma* and a peacock plume in his turban. He is shown with a red cloth behind him and sometimes with the swing containing Navanītapriyā-jī at his feet.



2. *Rāma Navamī*

The birthday of Rāma Chandra, the seventh incarnation of Vishṇu, is celebrated on the ninth of the light half of the month of Chaitra. When this is treated as the first half of the month, Rāma Navamī becomes the first festival of the yearly cycle (see catalog number 8).

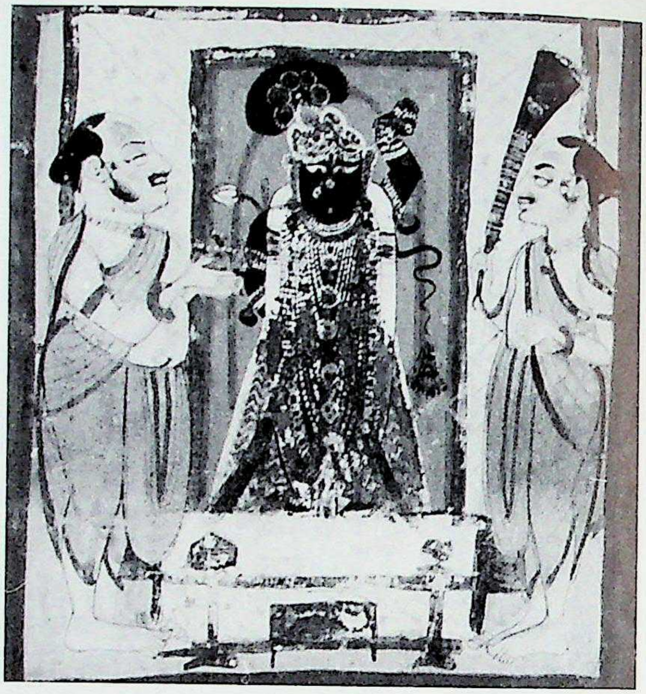
For this festival Śrī Nāth-jī is shown dressed in a saffron *chākdār jāma* with a peacock plume in his headdress. He stands before a white background within a pink pavilion.



3. *Mahāprabhu-jī kā Utsava*

The birthday of Mahāprabhu-jī, i.e. Vallabhāchārya, takes place on the eleventh of the dark half of the month of Vaiśākh (April - May).

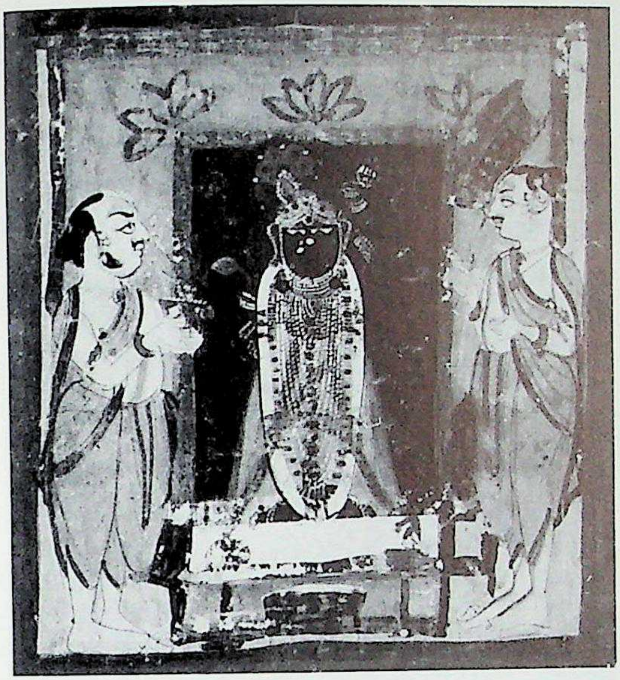
As in the case of all birthday celebrations, the image is dressed in a saffron colored *chākdār jāma* and wears a peacock plume in his turban. The back of the stele is decked in white with an orange *pichhavāī*.



4. *Akhya Tīj*

This takes place on the third of the light half of Vaiśākh when accounts are settled after the spring harvest.

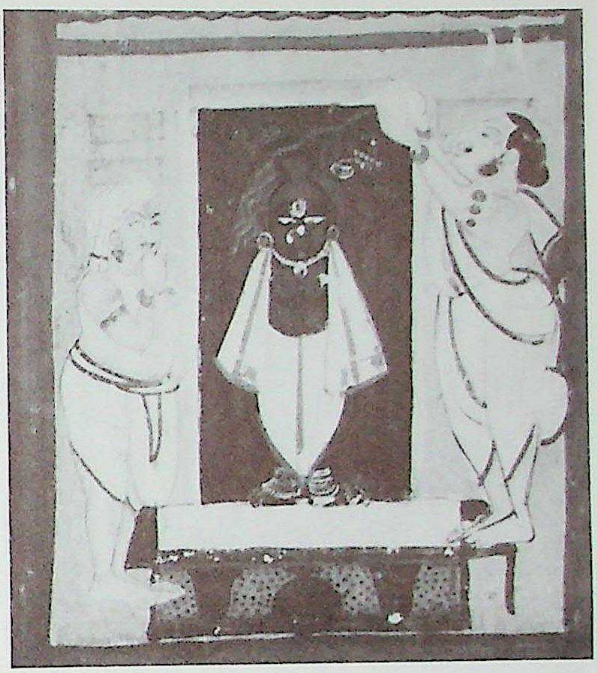
For this festival, Śrī Nāth-jī wears a loose muslin *dhoṭī* with a peacock plume in his turban. The back of the stele is saffron colored and there is a white *pichhavāī*.



5. *Narasiṁha Chaturdaśi*

Vishṇu is believed to have appeared as a man-lion (Narasiṁha) to protect his worshipper, Prahlāda, on the fourteenth of the dark half of Vaiśākh.

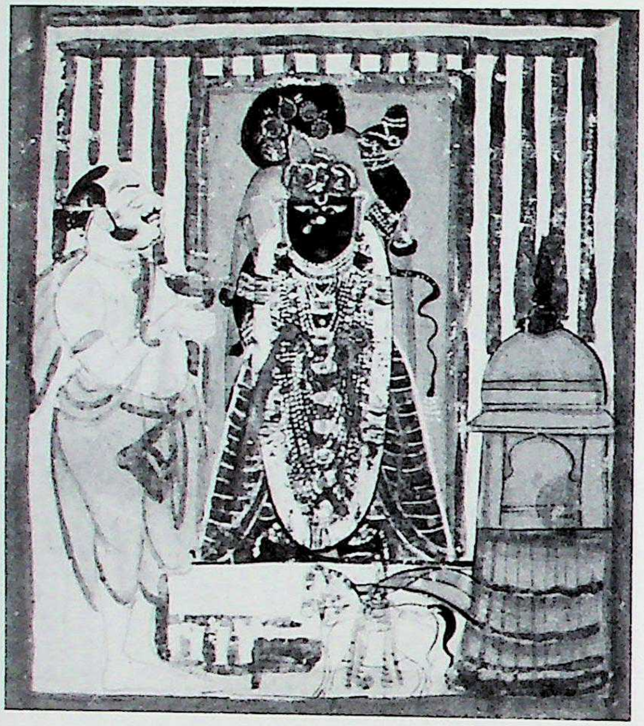
As this is a summer festival, the back of the stele is exposed and Śrī Nāth-jī wears only a loose muslin *dhoṭī* with a peacock plume in his turban. The *pichhavāī* is saffron colored.



6. *Asnān Jātrā*

On the full moon of the month, Jyeshṭha in the heat of summer, Śrī Nāth-jī is bathed.

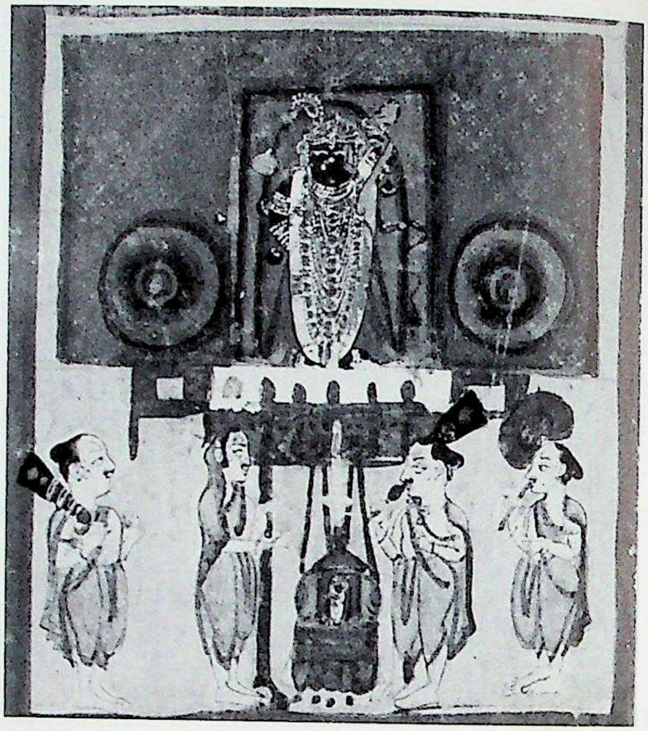
For this ceremony he wears a saffron *dhoṭī* and *dopaṭṭa* with no garlands and no ornament in his turban. The back of the stele is left bare and there is no *pichhavāī* hiding the rear wall of the shrine where niches are visible.



7. *Rath Jātrā*

On the third of the bright half of the month of Āshāṛh a silver chariot (*rath*) is brought into the presence of Śrī Nāth-jī and at Nathādwāra twenty-five thousand mangoes are presented as his food offering. In South India and Orissa images are taken on large chariots in procession, the most celebrated example being the festival at the temple of Kṛishṇa as Jagannāth at Purī, which has given us the word 'juggernaut'.

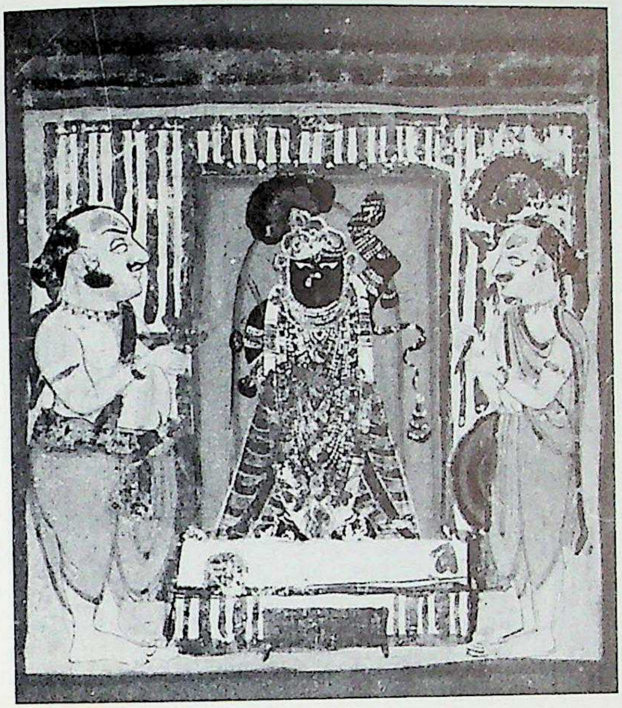
For this festival Śrī Nāth-jī wears a loose *dhoṭī* and peacock feathers in his turban. The back of the stele is orange and there is a striped white *pichhavāī*. The chariot, drawn by a horse, is sometimes depicted before the image.



8. *Ṭhakurānī Tīj*

The rainy month of Śrāvan is the occasion of several swinging ceremonies, of which the most important takes place on the third of the light fortnight. This day is sacred to the goddess Pārvatī. In Rājāsthān red garments are universally worn.

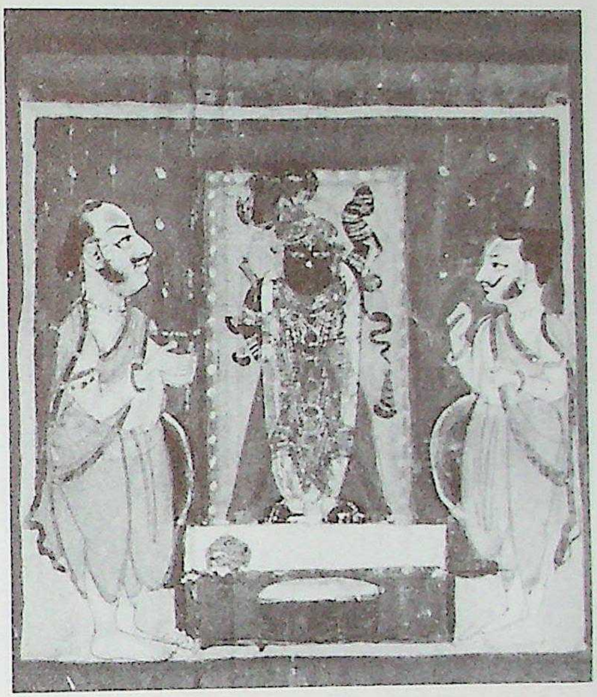
Śrī Nāth-jī is shown in a loose red *dhoṭī* with a green covering to the back of the stele and a red *pichhavāī*. His proxy appears before him on a swing.



9. *Pavitrā Ekādaśī*

The eleventh of the light half of Śrāvan is the day on which new sacred threads are presented.

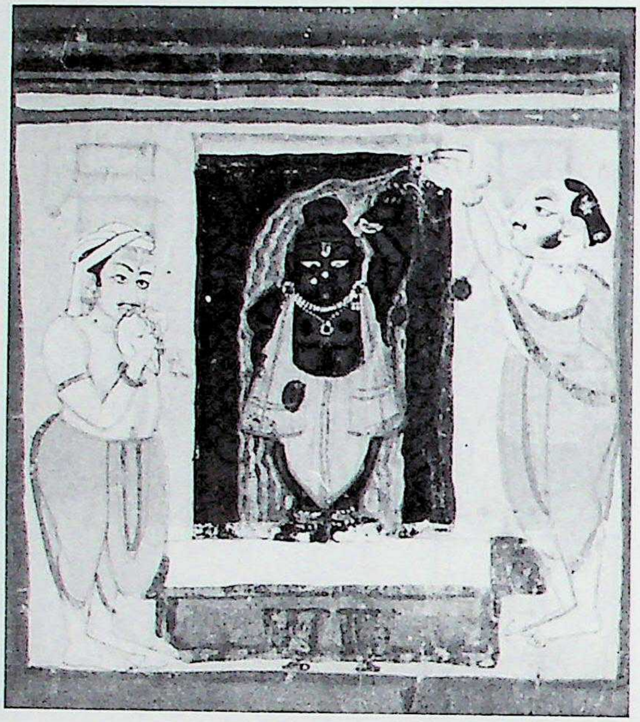
At this time, the image of Śrī Nāth-jī is dressed in a loose *dhoṭī* and the back of the stele is given a saffron coloring. There is a striped white *pichhavāī*.



10. *Rākhī Bandhan*

This festival celebrates the occasion when the goddess Lakshmī descended to the lower regions in order to release her husband from an agreement to reside with the king. As it would have been immodest for her to speak to Bali, she first made him her brother by tying a silk thread around his wrist. This precedent is still followed by Indian girls, who tie the *rākhī* to the wrists of male friends on the full moon of Śrāvan.

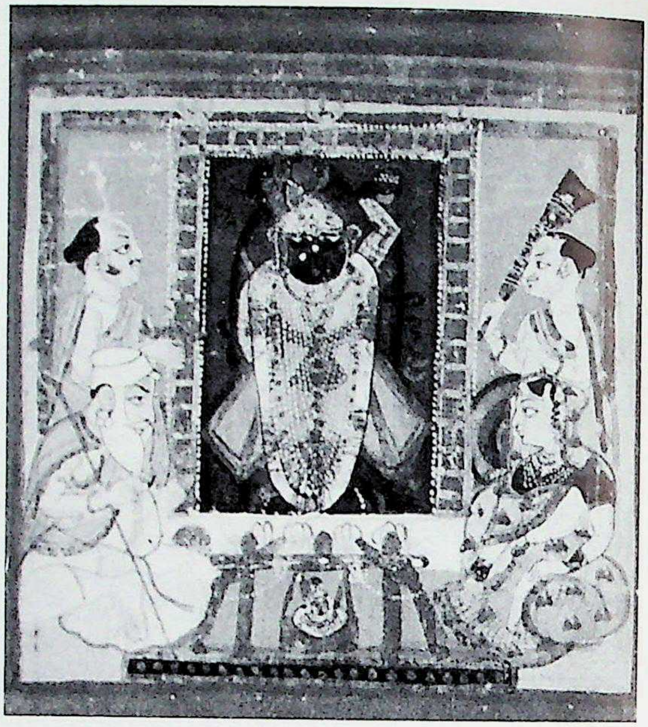
For this festival, Śrī Nāth-jī is dressed in a loose red *dhoṭī* with a peacock plume in his turban. The background of the image is saffron colored and the *pichhavāī* is red.



11. *Panchamṛitsnān*

This festival forms part of the celebrations of Kṛishṇa's birthday and is preceded by a fast on the seventh of the dark half of Bhādoṅ. The birth is said to have taken place at midnight, after which the image is bathed in the five nectars (*panchamṛit*), which are milk, curds, clarified butter, honey and sugar.

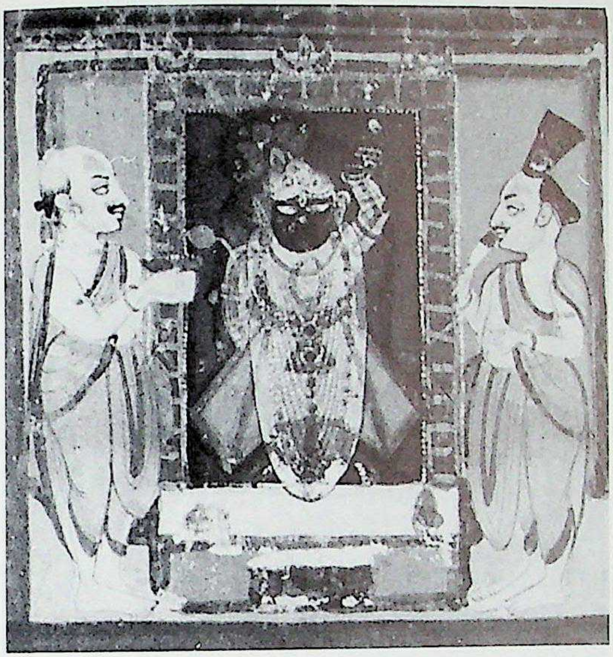
As in the case of the *Asnān Jātrā*, Śrī Nāth-jī wears a white *dhoṭī* and *dopaṭṭa* with no garlands or turban ornament. The back of the image and the rear wall of the shrine are left uncovered.



12. *Janmāshṭamī*

Kṛishṇa's birthday is celebrated on the eighth of the dark half of Bhādoṅ and is one of the most important festivals in the Vallabhāchārī calendar.

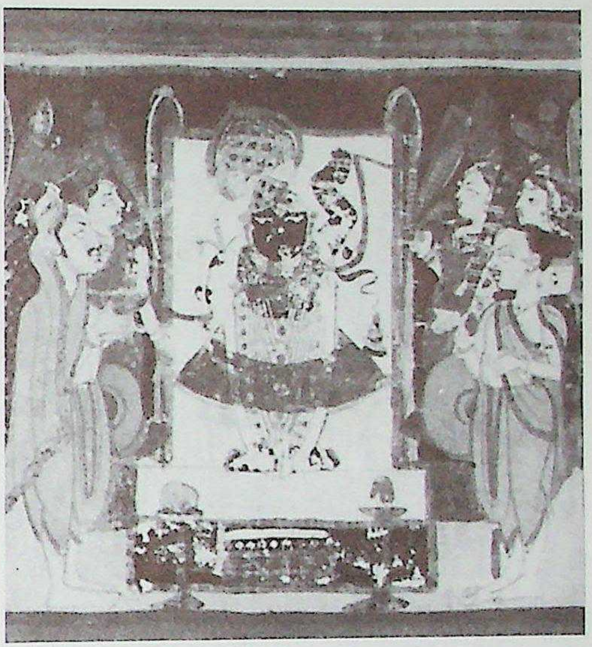
The image is dressed in a saffron *chākdār jāma* and has a peacock plume as his turban ornament. The back of the stele is blue and the *pichhavāī* is orange. Navanītapriyā-jī is shown tended by Nanda and Yasodā in the foreground.



13. *Radhāshṭamī*

Rādhā's birthday is celebrated on the eighth of the light half of Bhādoṅ.

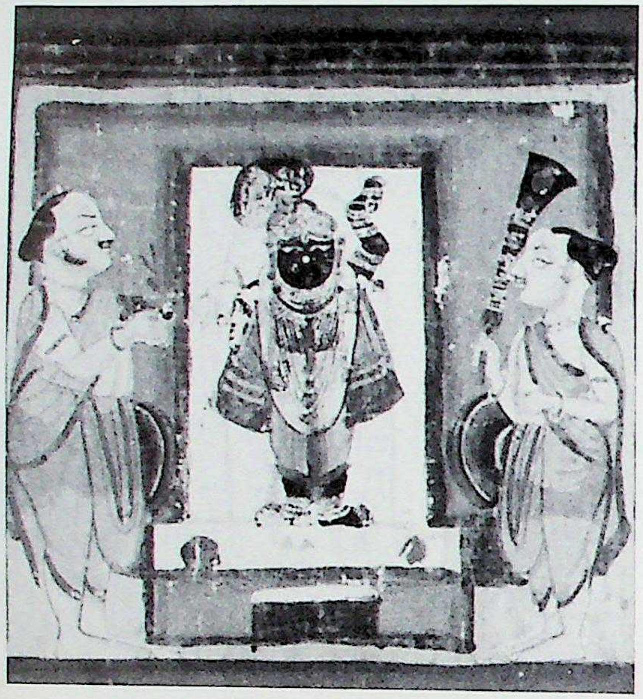
The *śriṅgāra* of Śrī Nāth-jī for this festival is similar to that for Kṛishṇa's birthday but Navanītapriyā-jī, Nanda and Yasodā are not shown.



14. *Dānā Ekādaśī*

This festival celebrates the *Dāna Līlā* and presumably takes place on the eleventh of the light half of Bhādoṅ.

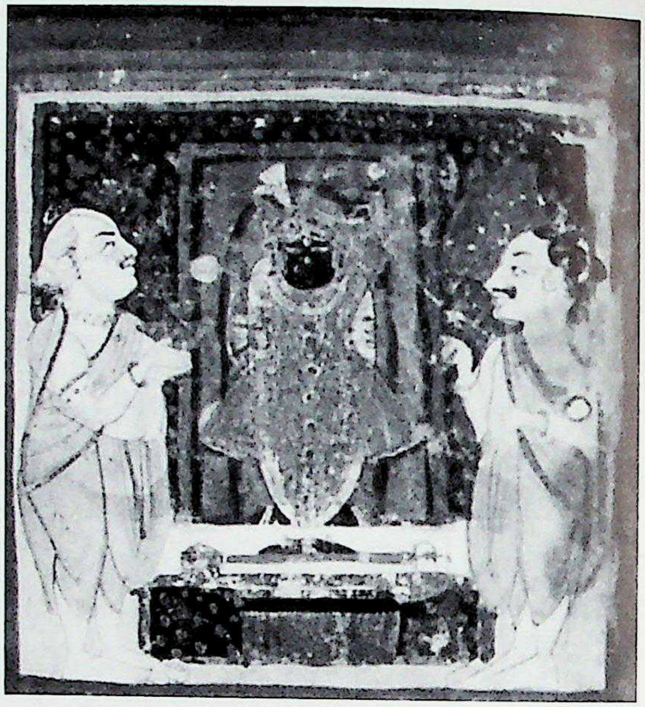
As in the case of all Kṛishṇa's *līlās* with the *gopīs* his image is dressed in a dancing skirt (*kachhnī*) and he wears a fan-shaped turban ornament instead of a peacock plume. The back of the stele is decorated with white flowers and a pictorial *pichhavāī* is used (see catalog number 3).



15. *Vāmana Dvādaśī*

The birth of Vāmana, the fifth incarnation of Vishṇu, is celebrated on the twelfth of the light half of Bhādoṅ. Vishṇu was born as a dwarf *Brāhmiṇ* when King Bali celebrated a sacrifice to commemorate his control over the three worlds. Vāmana begged the king for as much land as he could cover in three paces and then assumed his full size as the Cosmic Being. After taking two paces, Vishṇu allowed Bali to retain control over the nether regions.

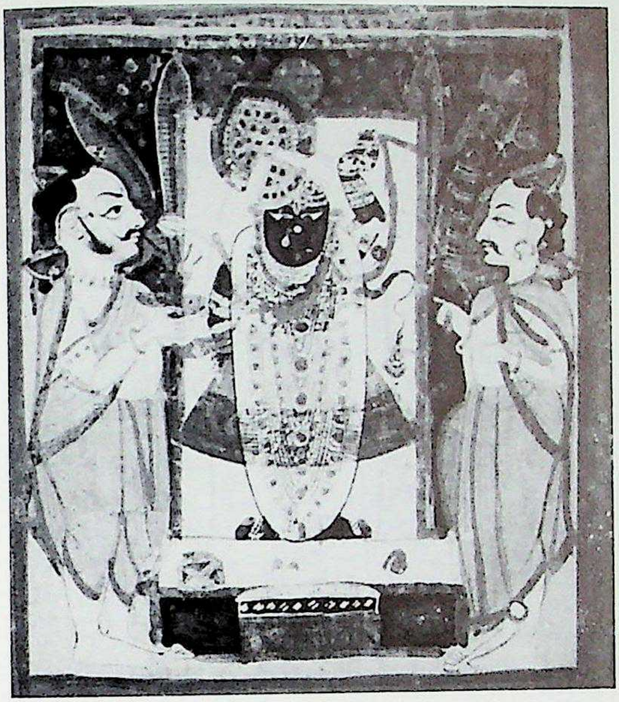
For this festival Śrī Nāth-jī is dressed as a *Brāhmiṇ* in saffron *dhoṭī* and *dopaṭṭa* but he also wears the turban with peacock-feathered ornament. The back of the stele is decked with white flowers and a red *pichhavāī* is used.



16. *Dasahrā*

The tenth of the light half of Āśvin is the day for celebrating the victory of Vishṇu's seventh incarnation Rāma over the demon king of Ceylon.

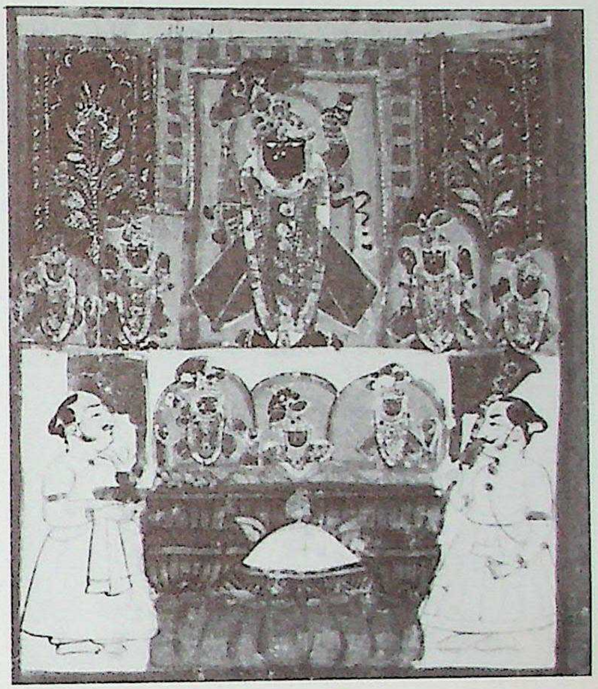
A sword and shield are placed before Śrī Nāth-jī and he is dressed in a white or silver *gheṛdār jāma* and wears a small turban ornament (*sarpech*). The back of the stele is green and the *pichhavāī* is dark green with red decoration.



17. *Śarat Purṇamā*

The full moon of the month Āśvin was when Kṛishṇa met the *gopīs* in the forest beneath the clear starlit sky which follows the passing of the monsoon.

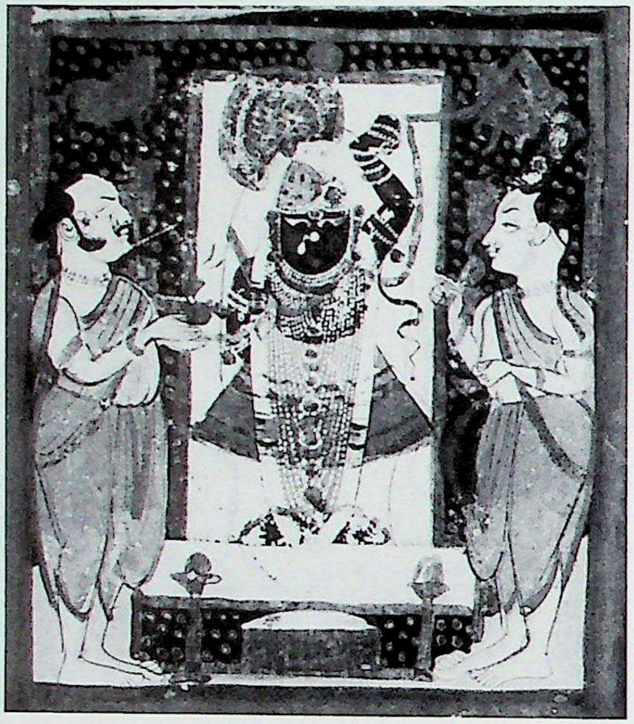
The image is dressed in a *kachhnī* with a large fan-shaped turban ornament. The back of the stele is white and a painted *pichhavāī* is used (see catalog numbers 1 and 6-10).



18. *Annakuṭ*

This festival is also known as the Govardhan since it commemorates the feeding of Kṛishṇa in his manifestation as the god of the mountain. It takes place on the first of the light half of the month Kārtik and celebrates the first fruits of the autumn harvest.

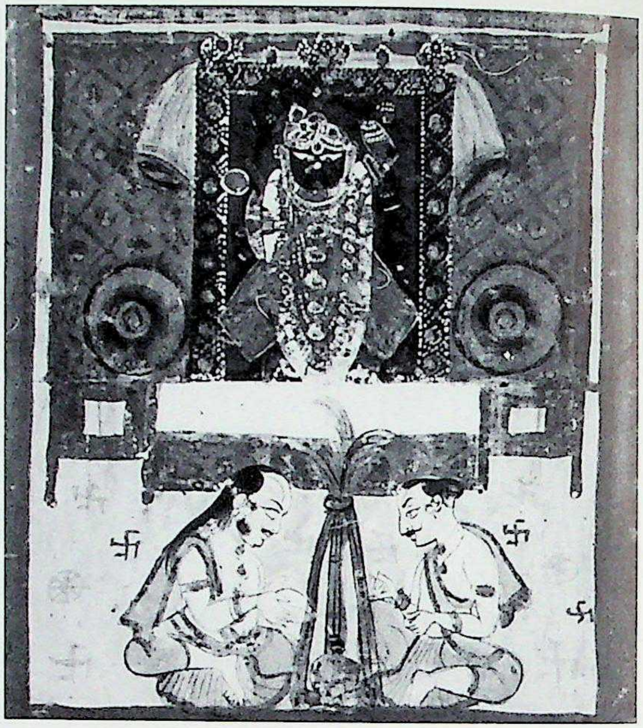
Śrī Nāth-jī wears a silver *chākdār jāma* and a distinctive type of peacock-feathered turban ornament. The background of the stele is covered with an orange cloth and the *pichhavāī* is black with white floral designs within arches.



19. *Gopāshṭamī*

On the eighth of the light half of Kārtik Kṛishṇa was promoted to a cowherd from a herder of calves. On this day cows are worshipped. Garlands are suspended from their necks and their horns, hooves and bodies are painted.

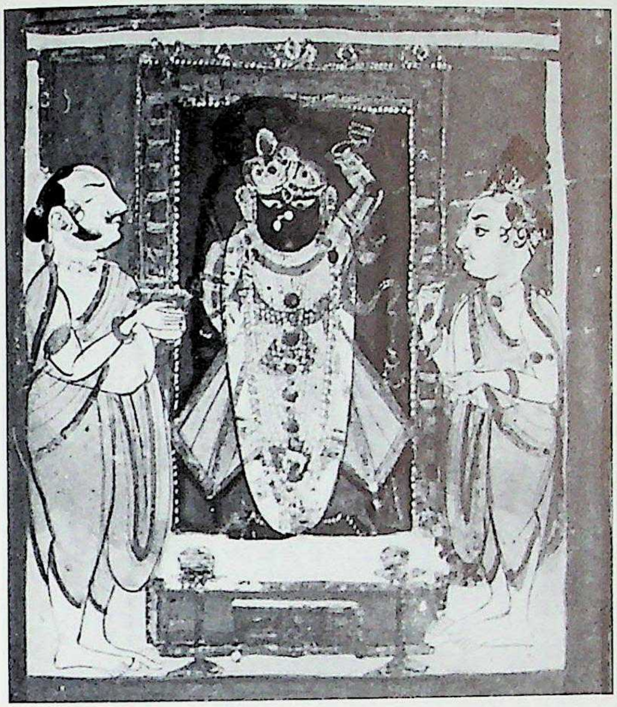
Śrī Nāth-jī is dressed in a *kachhnī* and has a fan-shaped ornament in his turban. The back of the stele is white and the *pichhavāī* shows cattle on a black background (see catalog numbers 16-18).



20. *Prabodhinī*

The eleventh of the light half of Kārtik is the day on which the gods awake from their four months slumber. It is particularly meritorious to fast and offer gifts during this festival.

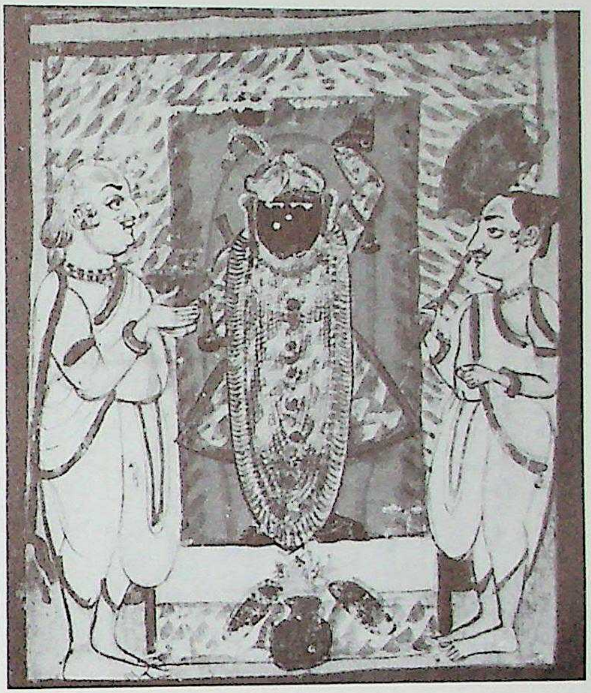
Śrī Nāth-jī is clothed in a red or silver *chākdār jāma* with a peacock-feathered turban ornament. Crossed sugar canes are placed before him. The back of the stele is shown as blue and a decorated *pichhavāī* is used.



21. *Gosāīṅ-jī kā Utsava*

The birthday of Śrī-Viṭṭalnāth-jī is celebrated in the month of Paush.

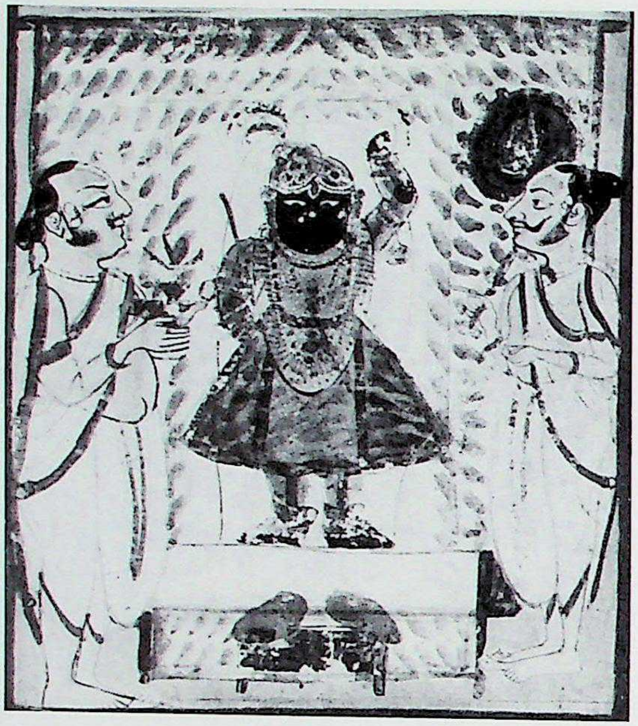
The *śriṅgāra* of the image resembles that used for the birthdays of Kṛishṇa and Rādhā.



22. *Vasant Panchamī*

The spring festival is celebrated on the fifth of the light half of the month of Māgh. Vishṇu is worshipped by setting up a pot containing mango blossom or other available plants. Red powder is thrown about on this day as in the Holī festival.

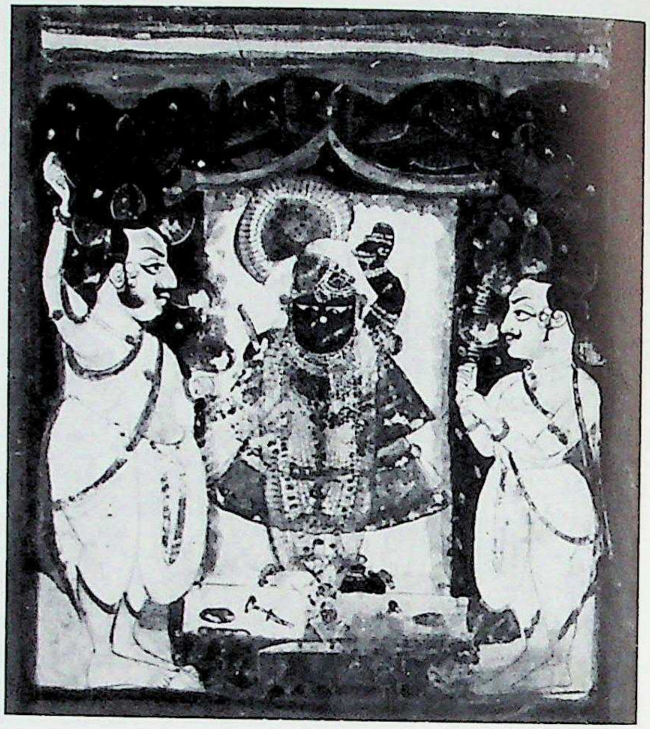
Śrī Nāth-jī wears a white *gheṛdār jāma* marked with red spots. His turban usually contains a peacock-feathered ornament. Before him is a pot containing plants for worship. The back of the stele is red and a white *pichhavāī* shows red spots from the throwing of powder.



23. *Pāṭ Utsava*

This corresponds with the Holī festival, which lasts for several days and comes to a climax on the full moon of Phālgun when the image of the demoness Holikā is burned. She was a witch and the aunt of Prahlāda whose father hoped to destroy the boy by fire when in Holikā's arms. By Vishṇu's aid Holikā was herself destroyed. The festival is also connected with the death of Pūtanā who tried to poison the baby Kṛishṇa. The throwing of red powder and colored liquids during the festival is considered to be a vestige of an ancient fertility sacrifice.

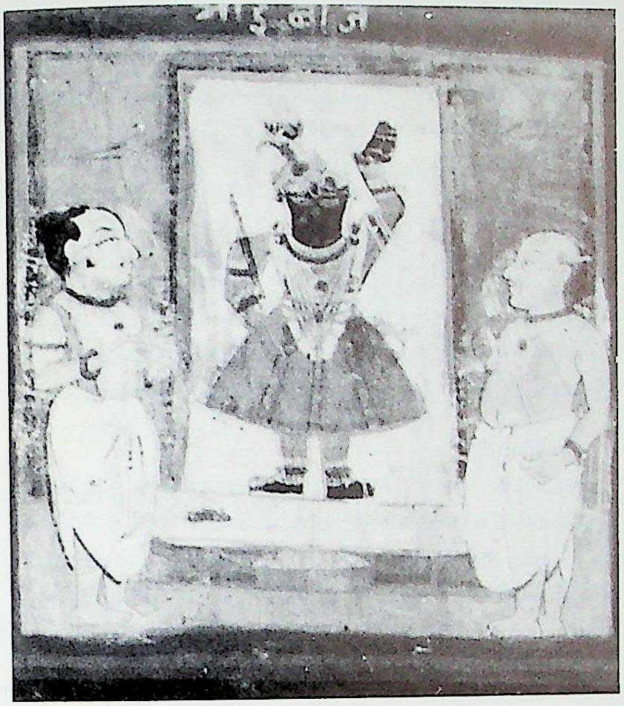
Śrī Nāth-jī is dressed in a saffron *gheṛdār jāma* spotted with red. He wears a peacock-feathered ornament in his turban. The background of the image is white with red blobs.

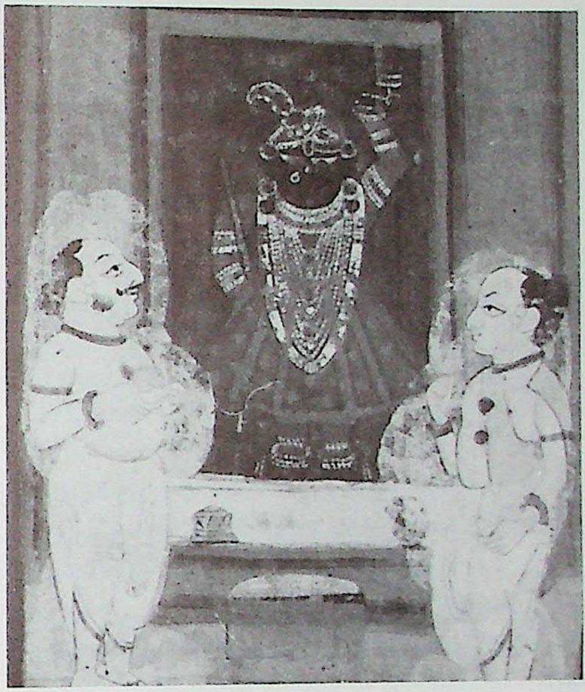


24. *Kunj Ekādaśī*

The word *kunj* signifies a bower or cave and, although the image is shown among plantains in some representations of this festival, it probably refers to the discovery of Śrī Nāth-jī in the cave on Mount Govardhan by Vallabhāchārya. This event took place on the eleventh of the bright half of the month of Phālgun when the festival is celebrated.

Śrī Nāth-jī is represented in a red and yellow *kachhnī* with a *dopaṭṭa* draped over his shoulders and a fan-shaped ornament in his turban. He is shown in front of a *pichhavāī* which depicts Mount Govardhan with trees growing around the image.





Additional Festivals

Occasionally two extra festivals are included among those listed above (see catalog number 16). These are the *Baniā Pāv*, which occurs in Chaitra and the *Bhāī Bīj*, which takes place on the second of the light half of the month of Kārtik. The meaning of *Baniā Pāv* is uncertain but it appears to be a dialect form of *Banjātrā Parva*, a festival in which pilgrims visit the various places (*bans* - woods) associated with Kṛishṇa's life among the cowherds. The *Bhāī Bīj* is a festival during which brothers pay visits to their married sisters. For the *Baniā Pāv* Śrī Nāth-jī wears a red *gheṛdār jāma* and stands before a blue background with a green *pichhavāī*. During the *Bhāī Bīj* he is dressed in a saffron *gheṛdār jāma*, the background is white and the *pichhavāī*, green.

Not all of the small panels surrounding the main scene of a *pichhavāī* are necessarily illustrations of the *śriṅgāra* of the image during the seasonal festivals. Sometimes they include scenes from the life of Kṛishṇa (see catalog number 11) or even comprise a complete cycle of events from his life.

GLOSSARY

Āchārya-jī
'Honored Teacher', i.e. Vallabhāchārya, the founder of the *Pushṭi Mārg*.

Āchārya kā Utsava
The festival which celebrates Vallabhāchārya's birthday.

advaita
Non-dualism: the doctrine known generally as monism, that nothing exists other than the Ultimate Being.

Aghan
The eighth month of the Hindu year (November-December), also known as *Mārgaśirsha*.

Akbar
Mughal Emperor (ruled 1556-1605), third member of the dynasty and effective founder of the Empire which dominated a large part of India until its gradual decline in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Akhya Tīj
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 4).

Akrūr
A member of the Yādava family and the uncle of Kṛishṇa.

Ānanda
'Joy', a term used to denote the Ultimate Bliss of the Supreme Being, and one of his three principal attributes.

Annakuṭ
'Mountain of food', a festival (see Appendix 2, no. 18).

Aṇubhāshya
A commentary on the *Brahmā* – or *Vedānta* – *Sūtras* by Vallabhāchārya.

aratī
A ceremony performed during worship by waving a lamp in a circular motion before the head of the image.

areca
A type of palm tree yielding a hard nut which is cut up and chewed with *betel* leaves and other ingredients. The nut, known as *supārī*, is an astringent and has a mildly intoxicating effect.

Arishṭa
A demon, son of Bali, who attacked Kṛishṇa in the form of a bull and was killed by him.

Āshāṛh
The fourth month of the Hindu year (June-July).

Ashṭa Chhāp
Eight Seals: the corporate name given to eight Hindī poets who wrote in the *Braj Bhāsha* dialect. Four, including the greatest, Sūr Dās, were associates of Vallabhāchārya, and the others of his son Viṭṭhalnāth.

Asnān Jātrā
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 6).

Āśvin
The seventh month of the Hindu year (September-October).

Aurangzīb
The sixth Mughal Emperor (ruled 1659-1707), who was bigoted in his devotion to Islam and made attempts to suppress Hindu image worship.

Bālakṛishṇa
Kṛishṇa as a child.

Balarāma (also Baladeva or Dau-jī)
The elder brother of Kṛishṇa. He is sometimes counted as the seventh incarnation of Vishṇu or of the serpent Śesha upon which Vishṇu sleeps.

Bali
A virtuous demon king who achieved control over the three worlds. Vishṇu in his dwarf incarnation used a stratagem to recover all but the lower regions. Bali then requested Vishṇu's companionship as a boon but Lakshmī prevailed on the king to modify this to a limited period of each year.

Baniā Pāv
The vernacular name of a festival, probably the *Banjātrā Parva* (see Appendix 2).

Banjātrā Parva
A festival (see Appendix 2).

betel
A vine whose leaves (*pān*) are used as a wrapping for the nut of the areca palm and chewed. The combination of leaf and nut is properly known as *pān-supārī*, but outside India the word 'betel' is sometimes used instead.

Bhādoṅ
The sixth month of the Hindu year, also called *Bhādrapada*.

Bhāgavata Purāṇa
A Hindu scripture which includes an account of Vishṇu's incarnation Kṛishṇa.

Bhāgvad Gītā
'The song of the Lord', a verse dialogue inserted within the Mahābhārata epic in which Kṛishṇa explains his philosophical doctrines to his friend, the hero Arjuna.

Bhāī Bīj
A festival (see Appendix 2)

bhakta
A person who is consumed by fervent love of God.

bhaktī
The path of fervent attachment to the deity as a means of salvation.

Bharatendu Harishchandra
A writer and dramatist (1850-85) who lived in Benāres and was one of the pioneers in the development of modern Hindī.

Bhārat Kalā Bhāvan
The art museum founded by Rai Krishna Dasa and now a part of Benāres Hindu University.

bhoga
Enjoyment or the thing enjoyed, e.g. food.

Brahmā
The first member of the Hindu trinity and the active Creator of the Universe. He is depicted with four heads and four arms.

Brāhmaṇ
The highest principle of the universe, which is beyond perception and thus beyond description other than by negatives. It is eternal and all pervading and has been referred to as the Supreme Spirit, the Cosmic Soul, the Absolute, the Ultimate Reality, etc. Union with it (i.e. *mokśa*) is the ultimate goal of the human soul which is separated from it by *māyā*.

Brahmā-Sūtras
A series of extremely condensed aphorisms on the nature of the Absolute Reality (*Brāhmaṇ*). They are also known as the *Vedānta-Sūtras* and said to have been composed by Bādarāyana, who is equated with Vyāsa, the compiler of the Vedic hymns.

brāhmiṇ (properly brāhmaṇ)
A member of the highest of the four main castes of Hindu society. The brāhmiṇs are priests whose duties are to preserve the *Vedas* by oral transmission and carry out sacrifices and the rituals of worship. They frequently carry on other occupations instead.

Braj Bhāshā
The dialect of the Mathurā region and one of the leading literary forms of Hindī.

Bṛindāban (also Vṛindāvan)
A town near Mathurā and formerly the village to which Kṛishṇa moved with the inhabitants of Gokul during his childhood.

Chaitanya
A Bengālī saint (1485-1533) who stressed emotion rather than ritual in the worship of Kṛishṇa. He advocated the singing of devotional songs (*kīrtans*), in which the love of Rādhā and Kṛishṇa takes a prominent place, as a means of drawing men towards God. The International Society for Kṛishṇa Consciousness (Hare Kṛishṇa movement) is a modern extension of Chaitanya's movement.

Chaitra
The first month of the North Indian calendar.

chākdār jāma
A type of coat popular at the Mughal court in the 16th century. It is distinguished by a lower hem which hangs in four or six points.

chaturdaśī
The fourteenth day in a lunar fortnight.

chaukī
A stool, also used as a gaming table.

chaupar (also pachīsī)
A game similar to ludo, set out on a cross-shaped cloth and placed before the image of Kṛishṇa for his enjoyment.

Chhappan Bhog
'Fifty-six foods' – another name for the Annakuṭ festival (see Appendix 2 no. 18). The name *Chhapan Bhog* is sometimes reserved for the celebration which takes place on the rare occasions when all seven of the images bequeathed to Viṭṭhalnath's sons are brought together. This need not take place on a fixed anniversary and is a rare occurrence due to the excessive cost and difficulty of arranging the participation of the images. At Nāthadwāra, a Chhapan Bhog festival different from the Annakuṭ is celebrated on the full moon of Aghan.

Dāmodardās
'Servant of Dāmodara' (i.e. of Kṛishṇa) – the name of several descendants of Vallabhāchārya.

Dāna Ekādaśī
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 14).

Dāna Līlā
Kṛishṇa's sport in which he and his companions waylaid milkmaids and exacted a toll of their produce on its way to be sold in Mathurā.

darśan
'Seeing' – a word used to describe entry into the presence of a revered person, or the deity. Vallabhāchārī worship lays emphasis on the manifestations of God's grace through the sight of his image. Thus the word *darśan* is used in preference to *pūjā*, which denotes Hindu worship generally.

Dasahrā
'The remover of ten sins' – a festival which takes place on the birthday of the Ganges, who washes away sin. (See Appendix 2, no. 16).

Devakī
Kṛishṇa's real mother, the wife of Vāsudeva and a cousin of the demon Kaṅśa.

devanāgarī
'Of the city of the gods' – the script in which Saṅskṛit and Hindī are written.

dhotī
A cloth tied around the waist. It may be worn either loosely or passed between the legs and tucked in at the back.

Ḍol Jātrā
'Swing festival' (see Appendix 2, no. 1).

dopaṭṭa
A cloth worn over the shoulders like a scarf.

Durgāvatī
Queen-regent of Goṇḍwānā in Central India. She ruled from 1548 until 1564 when she was defeated in battle by the forces of the Emperor Akbar.

Dwārkānāth-jī or Dwārkādhiś-jī
'Lord of Dwārkā (see Appendix 1, no. 4).

Dwārkeśjyoti
Name of the havelī in Baṛodā where Kṛishṇa is worshipped as 'Lord of Dwārkā'.

gaddī
A cushioned seat or throne.

Gandharva
A celestial being who performs music in Indra's heaven.

Gauṛ
A class of *brāhmiṇs* to which one of the main groups of Nāthadwāra artists claims to belong.

Gaurī
A name of the consort of Śiva.

Ghāṭ
A bathing place by a river which is often built up with stone steps.

gheṛdār
A type of coat (*jāma*) which has a 'circular' hem instead of points.

Giri Kandarā
The 'Mountain cave' in which Kṛishṇa is said to live during the heat of summer. It has recently become a subject for painted *pichhavāīs*.

Gokul
'Multitudes of cattle' – the village where Kṛishṇa was brought up on the opposite side of the river near Mathurā. The original Gokul is thought to be the neighboring village of Mahāban.

Gokulchandramā
'Moon of Gokul' – an epithet of Kṛishṇa (see Appendix 1, no. 6).

Gokulnāth
'Lord of Gokul' – an epithet of Kṛishṇa (see Appendix 1, no. 5).

gopa
A cowherd.

Gopāshṭamī
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 19).

gopī
Female member of the cowherd community—a milkmaid.

Gopīnāth
'Lord of the milkmaids' – an epithet of Kṛishṇa and a proper name given to several of Vallabha's descendants.

Gosāīṅ or Goswāmī
'Master of cattle' – a title given to the descendants of Vallabhāchārya. When followed by the honorific '*jī*' it especially refers to Vallabha's son, Viṭṭhalnāth.

Gosāīṅ-jī kā Utsava
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 21.)

Govardhan
'Nourisher of cattle' – the name of a hill to the west of Mathurā.

Govardhan Lāl
'Beloved of Govardhan' – an epithet of Kṛishṇa and the proper name of Goswāmī Govardhan Lāl, who acceded to the chief priesthood of Nāthadwāra in 1876.

Govardhannāth
'Lord of Govardhan' – an epithet of Kṛishṇa and name of the image known as Śrī Nāth-jī (see Appendix 1, no. 1).

Govind
'Cow keeper' – an epithet of Kṛishṇa and used as a proper name among his worshippers.

Govind dev-jī
'Cowherd god' – an epithet of Kṛishṇa and the name under which he is worshipped in the *havelī* of the Jaipur City Palace.

Gwāla
'Cowherd' – a daily ceremony when the image of Kṛishṇa is displayed at the time of leading the herds to graze.

Hare Kṛishṇa movement
A branch of the sect founded by Chaitanya and named after the chant 'Hare Kṛishṇa'. Hari is a name of Vishṇu which is chanted with that of Kṛishṇa because Chaitanya taught that the name of God should constantly be on the lips of his devotees. The modern movement is an evangelical mission to the West founded by Swami A. C. Bhaktivedanta in 1966.

havelī
A large 'house' or 'mansion' – the name given to temples of the Vallabhāchārī sect which are incorporated in the home of the priest in charge. Such temples are normally private to members of the sect.

Holī
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 23).

Holikā

A demoness (see Appendix 2, no. 23).

Indra

The god of the firmament and thus of clouds and storms. He is the king of the gods but inferior to the supreme deities Vishṇu and Śiva.

Jagannāth

'Lord of the Universe' – an epithet of Kṛishṇa as worshipped at Puri in Orissa.

Jain

The name of an austere heterodox sect of Hinduism whose followers worship twenty-four ascetic saviors called Jinas or Tīrthaṅkaras. The historic founder was the last Jina, Mahāvīra – a contemporary of the Buddha.

Jal Vihār

'Water sport' – an episode in Kṛishṇa's Rāsa Līlā when he played in the Jumnā with the *gopīs*.

Jāṅgīṛ

A sub-caste of painters working at Nāthadwāra who claim to be *brāhmiṇs* and to originate from Jaipur and Jodhpur.

Janmāshṭamī

A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 12).

Jhānkī

A 'show', 'exhibition', or 'scene in a play' – a term used for the eight daily appearances of the Kṛishṇa image to his worshippers.

jhūṭr or jhūṭhā

Food left over from a meal.

- jī

An honorific suffix used after the names of distinguished or favored persons.

jīva

The sentient individual soul considered to be an emanation of the Cosmic Being animating the material body.

kachhnī or kāchhinī

A dress with a fairly short skirt decorated with two or three horizontal bands of color. It was worn by dancers and its use as a dress for images of Kṛishṇa during the representation of his *līlās* probably derives from the dramatic dance performances in which the Rāsa Līlā is enacted.

kadamba

The tree *nauclea cadamba* which has yellow ball-like flowers and is particularly associated with Kṛishṇa.

Kailāsa

A mountain in the Himālayas where the god Śiva resides.

kalamkārī (from Persian *qalamkārī*)

A technique of textile-dyeing which combines mordant painting with the use of wax resists.

Kāliya

A serpent-king with five heads who lived in the Jumnā river. His mouths emitted fumes which poisoned the surrounding country. Kṛishṇa danced on Kāliya's heads and forced him to leave the area.

kalpadruma

A tree growing in Indra's paradise which fulfills all desires.

Kaṅśa

The tyrannical king of Mathurā who was born to the wife of King Ugrasena after a demon made her pregnant in the guise of her husband. Kaṅśa deposed Ugrasena and was eventually killed by Kṛishṇa.

Karsandas Mulji

A Bombay journalist and reformer who conducted a campaign against certain doctrines and practices of the Vallabhāchārī priesthood. In 1861 a libel action was brought against him, and judgment was largely given in his favor. He subsequently published an account of the trial and also a book describing and condemning the activities of the sect.

Kārtik
The eighth month of the North Indian calendar (October-November).

Keśav Dās
A late 16th century Hindī poet. He is celebrated for his *Rasikapriyā*, a work on rhetoric which describes the types and behavior of lovers, with Rādhā and Kṛishṇa as the principal exemplars.

Kṛishṇa
The eighth incarnation of Vishṇu, who is worshipped as the Supreme Deity by followers of the Vallabhāchārī sect.

Kṛishṇadevarāya
A distinguished ruler of the kingdom of Vijāyanagar in the Deccan (reigned 1509-29).

kuṇḍ
A well or reservoir.

Kunj Ekādaśī
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 24).

Kushāṇ
Name of a Central Asian tribe which settled in Northern India and ruled during the early years of the Christian era. Many sculptures produced during the period of Kushāṇ rule have been found in the Mathurā area where they had their winter capital.

Lakshmaṇ Bhaṭ
A South Indian *brāhmiṇ*, father of Vallabhāchārya.

Lakshmī
The Hindu goddess of fortune and wife of Vishṇu.

lakuṭ
A stick used by cowherds and often shown carried by Śrī Nāth-jī or placed before him.

līlā
'Sport' or 'play', used to describe the relations between the Supreme Being and phenomenal creation, also the diversions of Kṛishṇa during his life among the cowherds of Braj.

Madanmohan-jī
'He who intoxicates with desire' — an epithet of Kṛishṇa (see Appendix 1, no. 7).

Māgh
The eleventh month of the North Indian calendar (January-February).

Mahādān
The subject of modern *pichhavāīs* which show an elaborated version of the Dāna Līlā.

Mahāprabhu
'Illustrious Master'—a title by which Vallabhāchārya is known to his followers.

Mānasi Gangā
A tank or reservoir near Mount Govardhan which fills seasonally and dries up in summer.

Maṅgala
'Auspicious' — name of the morning ceremony when the image of Kṛishṇa is displayed at the time of his waking.

masnad
'Sitting place' or 'throne'.

Mathurā
Town on the river Jumnā in Uttar Pradesh, legendary home of the Yādava family into which Vishṇu took birth as Kṛishṇa.

Mathurānāth-jī or Mathureś-jī
'Lord of Mathurā' (see Appendix 1, no. 2).

māyā
A magical power from which arises the illusory existence of the phenomenal world. According to Śaṅkara this arises from ignorance but theists such as Vallabhāchārya regard it as the means by which God brings the world into existence for his own enjoyment.

mokśa
Final release of the soul from the bondage brought about by rebirth in the phenomenal world.

morchhal
A fly whisk or fan of peacock feathers.

Nanda
Kṛishṇa's stepfather, the headman of the cowherd village of Gokul.

Nārada
A heavenly sage and musician, who often acted as a go-between in the affairs of the gods.

Narasiṁha Chaturdaśī
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 5).

Nāthadwāra
A town twenty-four miles north of Udaipur in Rājāsthān. Headquarters of the cult of Śrī Nāth-jī (see Appendix 1, no. 1).

Navanītapriyā-jī
'Lover of fresh butter' — an epithet of Kṛishṇa, whose image under this name is worshipped along with that of Śrī Nāth-jī at Nāthadwāra.

pachīsī
Another name for the game of *chaupar*, which is called *pachīsī* after the number of its highest throw — twenty-five.

pāījāma
Trousers.

pān
The leaf of the *betel* vine, which is folded around pieces of *areca* nut, the combination being known as *pān-supārī*.

Panchamṛitsnān
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 11).

pāndān
A box for keeping *betel* leaves (*pān*) in fresh condition.

Parvatī
A goddess, the wife of Śiva.

pāṭa
A table or plank.

Pāṭ Utsava
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 23).

Pavitrā Ekādaśī
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 9).

Phālgun
The twelfth month of the North Indian calendar (February-March).

Phūl Ḍol
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 1).

pichhavāī
'That which hangs at the back' — a cloth which hangs behind the image in a Vallabhāchārī shrine.

pīpal
The sacred fig tree.

piṭhaka
A cloth hanging like a *pichhavāī* which has a rectangular portion cut from the center of the lower edge so that it resembles a doorway.

Prabodhinī
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 20).

Prahlāda
A pious prince, the grandson of Bali, whose devotion to Vishṇu enraged his father, Hiraṇyakaśipu. To protect Prahlāda, Vishṇu appeared as Narasiṁha and destroyed the king.

prasād
Food which has been offered to the deity and then may be consumed sacramentally by his worshippers.

Premsāgar
'Ocean of love' — title of a Hindī translation of the tenth book of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* by Paṇḍit Lallū-jī Lāl.

pūjā
Normal Hindu temple worship in which offerings are made to the divinity.

Pūrbiā
'A person from the East', the name of a group of painters at Nāthadwāra, who claim to have migrated

from Delhi and Alwar. The Alwar school of painting is a late offshoot of the Mughal school of Delhi and is notable for its use of heavy shading. The arrival of artists from Alwar may account for such features in recent examples from the Nāthadwāra school.

Purushottama

'Best of men' – a title of the Supreme Spirit and identified by Vallabhāchārya with Kṛishṇa.

Pushṭi Mārg

'The path of nourishment', or 'Way of Grace' – the name given to Vallabha's doctrine and to the sect founded by him.

Pūtanā

A female demon, daughter of Bali, sent by Kaṅśa to kill the baby Kṛishṇa by suckling him – an act which proved fatal to her instead.

Rādhā

The wife of a cowherd, Ayana gosha, and the favorite mistress of Kṛishṇa. Her love for Kṛishṇa is treated as allegorical of the soul's love for God. In some sectarian texts she is regarded as Kṛishṇa's legal wife.

Rādhāshṭamī

A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 13).

Rājbhoga

'Royal meal' – the lunchtime meal taken by images of Kṛishṇa in the presence of his worshippers.

Rāj Siṅgh

The Mahārāṇā of Mewāṛ (ruled 1661-1681), who led the opposition to the Emperor Aurangzīb in Rājāsthān and gave protection to the image of Śrī Nāth-jī.

Rākhī Bandhan

A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 10).

Rāma Chandra

The seventh incarnation of Vishṇu and hero of the epic Rāmāyaṇa, which tells of the abduction of his wife Sītā and her recovery after the defeat of Rāvaṇa, demon king of Ceylon.

Rāma Navamī

A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 2).

Rāmānuja

An 11th-12th century South Indian theistic philosopher, who reconciled the teaching of the *Vedānta-Sūtras* with devotion to Vishṇu as a personal deity.

rasa

'Sap', 'juice', 'taste', 'flavor' or 'sentiment' – a word used to denote the aesthetic principle.

Rāsa Maṇḍala

A joyful circular dance performed by Kṛishṇa with the *gopīs*.

rasika

A person with a cultivated sense of aesthetic discrimination.

Rasikapriyā

'The cultivated lover' – the name of a textbook in verse by the poet Keśav Dās.

Rāsa Līlā

Kṛishṇa's sports in the forests of Bṛindāban with the *gopīs*.

Rath Jātrā

A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 7).

Revatī

Wife of Balarāma.

ṛishi

An inspired poet or sage. There were seven principal *ṛishis* to whom the Vedas were revealed.

Rukmiṇī

A princess whom Kṛishṇa abducted and married as his first wife.

rūmāl

A cloth used as a handkerchief or cover for trays, etc.

Sadupaṇḍe

Owner of the cow which lustrated the image of Śrī Nāth-jī with milk when it was buried on Mount Govardhan.

sāja
'Things made', e.g., arms, accoutrements, furnishings, etc., thus a 'set' of things such as hangings for a shrine.

Śālagrāma
A type of sacred stone or fossil found in the river Gandak and worshipped as the aniconic form of Vishṇu.

Saṁkīrtan
Devotional singing and dancing in praise of Kṛishṇa in which the worshippers sometimes swoon with ecstasy.

Sampradāya
'Traditional doctrine' or a sect holding that doctrine.

Sandhyā
'Evening' — when images of Kṛishṇa are worshipped at the time of bringing back the herds from pasture.

Śaṅkara
A great South Indian philosopher of the 8th-9th centuries A.D. whose doctrine of non-dualism was expounded in his commentary on the *Vedānta-Sūtras*.

Saṅyoga
The sense of union with an object of perception, i.e., the Beloved or God.

Śarat Purṇamā
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 17).

sāṛī
Female garment comprising a length of cloth wrapped around the body.

sarpech
A turban ornament.

Śayana
'Sleep' — the ceremony when the image of Kṛishṇa is put to bed.

Sevā
'Service' — one of the two main forms of Vallabhāchārī worship.

Siṁhāsana
'Lion seat', i.e., a throne.

Sīṛhī
'Steps' — also used of the cloth covering for the steps to the *siṁhāsana*.

Śiva
The third member of the Hindu trinity who occupies the role of Destroyer of the Universe at the end of each phase of the cosmic cycle. He is considered by many Hindus to be the Supreme Being. He lives as an ascetic on Mount Kailāsa and is thus often depicted as a *yogī*.

Śivarātri
A festival which falls on the fourteenth of the dark half of Māgh. It celebrates the occasion when Brahmā and Vishṇu were arguing which was the greater whereupon Śiva intervened and humbled both.

Śrāvan
The fifth month of the North Indian calendar (July-August).

Śrī
'Prosperity' — an honorific prefix and also a name of the goddess Lakshmī.

Śrī Nāth-jī
The image of Kṛishṇa as Govardhannāth, which was revealed to Vallabhāchārya and is worshipped at Nāthadwāra.

Śriṅgāra
'Erotic sentiment' — a term also used to describe the adornment of a person or image.

Subodhinī
A commentary by Vallabhāchārya on the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*.

Śuddhādvaita
'Pure non-dualism'—the doctrine of monism preached by Vallabhāchārya.

sūfī
A class of Muslim mystic who seeks union with God through love.

Sūr Dās
A blind poet from Āgra (c. 1503 - 1563) who was a friend of Vallabhāchārya and wrote devotional poetry in *Braj Bhāshā* praising Kṛishṇa.

Svarūpa
'Own form' — the images of Kṛishṇa which, according to Vallabhāchārya were to be regarded as actual manifestations of the deity.

Thakurānī Tīj
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 8).

Tīrtha
A sacred bathing place and center of pilgrimage.

Uddhava
A Yādava friend of Kṛishṇa who visited the *gopīs* on Kṛishṇa's behalf after Kṛishṇa had left Bṛindāban.

Ugrasena
The Yādava king of Mathurā deposed by Kaṅśa and reinstated by Kṛishṇa.

Uṭṭāpana
'Awakening' — a ceremony performed in the afternoon when the image of Kṛishṇa is woken from his nap.

Vaiśākh
The second month of the North Indian calendar (April-May).

Vaishṇava
A worshipper of the god Vishṇu and his incarnations, including Kṛishṇa.

Vallabhāchārya
Founder of the *Pushṭi Mārg*.

Vāmana Dvādaśī
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 15).

Vārkarī
A follower of a sect, the *Vārkarī Panth*, which worships Vishṇu as Viṭhobā. Their chief shrine is at Paṇḍharpūr in Mahārāshtra.

Varshā
The rainy season or monsoon.

Vāruṇī
A spirit distilled from a mixture of hogweed and juice of the date palm.

Vasant Panchamī or Vasant Utsava
A festival (see Appendix 2, no. 22).

Vāsudeva
The father of Kṛishṇa.

Veda
Four collections of sacrificial hymns which comprise the earliest religious literature of India.

Vedānta
'End of the Veda' — a philosophical system which elaborates the Upanishadic doctrines of the Absolute (*Brāhmaṇ*).

Vedānta-Sūtras
Another name for the *Brahmā-Sutras*.

Vijayanagar
A ruined city in the Deccan which was the capital of a Hindu Empire from 1336 to 1565.

Vikram Saṁvat (abbreviation V. S.)
A Hindu era commencing in 58 B.C.

vīna
A musical instrument with several strings and gourds as resonators.

Vishṇu
The second member of the Hindu trinity, who occupies the role of Preserver of the Universe. He is regarded as the Supreme Being by a large part of the population of India.

Viśishṭādvaita
'Qualified non-dualism'. A doctrine of monism taught by Rāmānuja in which the individual soul is distinct from the Universal Soul although identical with it.

Viṭhobā
A manifestation of Vishṇu (see Appendix 1, no. 3).

Viṭṭhalnāth
The name of a manifestation of Kṛishṇa (see Appendix 1, no. 3). Also the proper name of the second son of Vallabhāchārya.

Viyoga
The sensation of separation from an object of perception, i.e. the Beloved, or God.

Yādava
Name of an ancient Indian tribe which settled in the Mathurā area.

Yallamāgarū
The mother of Vallabhāchārya.

Yasodā
The wife of Nanda and foster mother of Kṛishṇa.

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TRANSLITERATION AND PRONUNCIATION

The system of transliteration used here is a modified form of that employed by the Royal Asiatic Society. Changes such as *ṛi* for *ṛ*, *sh* for *ṣ*, *ch* for *c*, etc. have been preferred as an aid to pronunciation. Geographical names are usually based on commonly accepted spellings and the names of modern persons are transliterated according to the forms used by them. I do not claim consistency over the transliteration of *anuswāra* nor in choosing between vernacular and sanskṛit forms of words.

The short vowels *a*, *i*, *u* should be pronounced as in English *hut*, *hit* and *put*. The long vowels *ā*, *ī*, *ū*, *e*, *ai*, *o*, *au* have roughly the same pronunciation as in Italian.

The consonant *ś* is pronounced *sh*, as in the English word *sharp* and the aspirated consonants *th* and *ph* should be pronounced as in English *pothook* and *haphazard*, not as in *think* and *Philip*. For pronunciation purposes the other diacritical marks can be ignored.

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